

A N
E S S A Y
U P O N
P R I N T S;

CONTAINING
Remarks upon the Principles of picturefque Beauty,
T H E
Different Kinds of Prints,
A N D T H E
Characters of the moft noted Mafters;

ILLUSTRATED BY
Criticifms upon particular Pieces;

To which are added,
Some Cautions that may be ufeul in
collecting Prints.

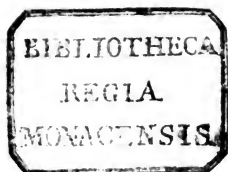
*Artificumque manus inter fe, opumque labores
Miramur.*

Æn. i. 459.

L O N D O N:

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M D C C L X V I I I.



T H E
P R E F A C E.

*N*otwithstanding the following work,
a few additions excepted, hath lain
by the author at least fifteen years, it
is very far from being so perfect, as he
could have wished: any new lights
therefore, and information, he will be
glad to receive, through the hands of
a 2 his

ii The P R E F A C E.

his bookseller. In many things he fears he may have passed wrong judgments ; and in some points, he hath not had all the means of information, which he could have desired : for as he hath taken nothing upon trust, with regard to the characters of masters, he sometimes wanted the opportunity he wished for, of consulting their works.

Since his work was printed, the author hath seen a Dictionary of engravers, ancient and modern, in three volumes, published by F. BASAN, engraver at Paris ; which seems to be accurate ; and might in some points have been of service to him. It contains a very numerous catalogue of engravers, the more eminent of whom only
are

The PREFACE. iii

are taken notice of in the following pages. Of modern prints the author hath purposely said little; declining generally to give his opinion of living artists.

He thought it necessary to introduce his work by a few observations on the principles of painting, as far as those principles can be applied to prints. As these observations are not always new, he hath endeavoured, at least, to make them concise.

In his account of artists he hath paid some attention to chronology; but has, in many cases, purposely neglected it, with a view of bringing those masters together, whose manners are alike.

iv The P R E F A C E.

The chapter containing criticisms on particular prints, is an addition to his original plan. He was advised to insert something of this kind, as an illustration of his principles.

N. B. When the figures on the *right side* are spoken of, those are meant, which are *opposite to* the spectator's right : and so of the *left*.

Explanation

Explanation of Terms.

Composition, in its *large* sense, means a picture in general : in its *limited* one, the art of grouping figures, and combining the parts of a picture. In this latter sense it is synonymous with *disposition*.

Design, in its strict sense, applied chiefly to *drawing* : in its more enlarged one, defined page 3. In its most enlarged one, sometimes taken for a picture in general.

A whole : The idea of *one* object, which a picture should give in its comprehensive view.

2 *Explanation of Terms.*

Expression : its strict meaning defined page 24 : but it often means the force, by which objects of *any* kind are represented.

Effect arises chiefly from the management of light ; but the word is sometimes applied to the general view of a picture.

Spirit, in its strict sense, defined p.34. but it is sometimes taken in a more enlarged one, and means the *general* effect of a masterly performance.

Manner, synonymous with *execution*.

Picturesque : a term expressive of that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture.

Picturesque

Pictureesque grace: an agreeable form given, in a picture, to a clownish figure.

Repose, or *quietness* applied to a picture, when the *whole* is harmonious; when nothing glares either in the light, shade, or colouring.

To *keep down*, *take down*, or *bring down*, signify throwing a degree of shade upon a glaring light.

A middle tint, a medium between a strong light, and strong shade: the phrase is not at all expressive of colour.

Catching lights: strong lights, which strike upon some particular parts of an object, the rest of which is in shadow.

• *Studies*

4. *Explanation of Terms.*

Studies, the sketched ideas of a painter,
not wrought into a whole.

Freedom, the result of quick execution.

Extremities, hands and feet.

Air, expresses chiefly the graceful
action of the head; but often
means a graceful attitude.

Contrast, the opposition of one part
to another.

T H E

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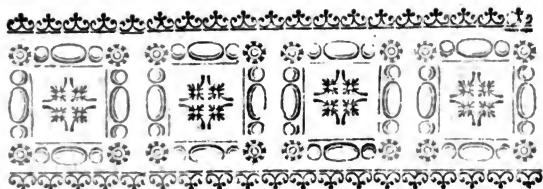
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CHAPTER I.

*The principles of Painting considered,
so far as they relate to Prints.*

A Painting, or picture, is distinguished from a print only by the colouring, and the manner of execution. In other respects, the

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foundation of beauty is the same in both; and we consider a print, as we do a picture, in a double light, with regard to a *whole*, and with regard to its *parts*. It may have an agreeable effect as a *whole*, and yet be very culpable in its *parts*. It may be likewise the reverse. A man may make a good appearance upon the *whole*; tho' his *limbs*, examined separately, may be wanting in exact proportion. His *limbs*, on the other hand, may be exactly formed, and yet his *person*, upon the *whole*, disgusting.

To make a print agreeable as a *whole*, a just observance of those rules is necessary, which relate to *design*, *disposition*, *keeping*, and the *distribu-*
tion.

tion of light: to make it agreeable in its *parts*, of those which relate to *drawing, expression, grace, and perspective*.

By *design*, (a term, which painters sometimes use in a more limited sense) I mean the general conduct of the piece as a representation of such a particular story. It answers, in an historical relation of a fact, to a judicious choice of circumstances, and includes a *proper time, proper characters, the most affecting manner of introducing those characters, and proper appendages*.

With regard to a *proper time*, the painter is assisted by good old dra-

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matic rules; which inform him, that *one* point of time only should be taken — the most affecting in the action; and that no other part of the story should interfere with it. Thus *in the death of ANANIAS*, if the instant of his falling down be chosen, no anachronism should be introduced; every part of the piece should correspond; each character should be under the strongest impression of astonishment, and horror; those passions being yet unallayed by any cooler passions succeeding.

With regard to *characters*, the painter must suit them to his *piece* by attending to historical truth, if his subject be history; or to heathen mythology, if it be fabulous.

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He must farther *introduce them properly*. They should be ordered in such an advantageous manner, that the principal figures, those which are most concerned in the action, should catch the eye *first*, and engage it *most*. This is an essential ingredient in a well-told story. In the first place, they should be the least embarrassed of the group. This alone gives them distinction. But they may be farther distinguished, sometimes by a *broad light*; sometimes, tho' but rarely, and when the subject requires it, by a *strong shadow*, in the midst of a light; sometimes by a remarkable *action*, or *expression*; and sometimes by a combination of two or three of these modes of distinction.

The last thing included in *design* is the use of *proper appendages*. By *appendages* are meant animals, landskip, buildings, and in general, whatever is introduced into the piece by way of ornament. Every thing of this kind should correspond with the subject, and rank in a proper subordination to it. BASSAN would sometimes paint a scripture-story; and his method was, to croud his foreground with cattle, well painted indeed, but wholly foreign to his subject; while you seek for his principal figures, and at length perhaps with difficulty find them in some remote corner of his picture. We often see a landskip well adorned with a story in miniature. The *landskip* here is principal; but at the same

same time the figures, which tell the story, tho' subordinate to the *landskip*, are the *principal figures*. BASSAN's practice was different. In his pictures neither the *landskip*, nor the *story* is principal. His cattle are the ornament of his pieces. To introduce a story then is absurd.

When all these rules are observed, when a proper point of time is chosen; when characters corresponding with the subject are introduced, and these ordered so judiciously as to point out the story in the strongest manner; and lastly, when all the appendages, and under-parts of the piece are suitable, and subservient to the subject, then the story is well told, and of course the design is perfect.

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The

The second thing to be considered with regard to a *whole*, is *disposition*. By this word is meant the art of grouping the figures, and of combining the several parts of a picture. *Design* considers how each part, *separately taken*, concurs in producing a *whole* — a *whole*, arising from the *unity of the subject*, not the *effect of the object*. For the figures in a piece may be so ordered, as to tell the story in an affecting manner, which is as far as *design* goes, and yet may want that agreeable *combination*, which is necessary to please the eye. To produce such a combination is the business of *disposition*. In the cartoon of St. PAUL *preaching at Athens*, the *design* is perfect; and

the characters, in particular, are so ordered, as to tell the story in a very affecting manner: yet the several parts of the picture are far from being agreeably combined. If RUBENS had had the *disposition* of the materials of this picture, and the management of the lights, it's effect as a *whole* had been very different.

Having thus distinguished between *design* and *disposition*, I shall explain the latter a little farther.

It is an obvious principle, that one object at a time is enough to engage either the senses or the intellect. Hence the necessity of *unity* or a *whole* in painting. The eye, upon a complex view, must be able to
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comprehend the picture as *one object*, or it cannot be satisfied. It may be pleased indeed by feeding on the parts separately ; but a picture, which can please no otherwise ; is as poor a production, as a machine, the springs and wheels of which are finished with nicety, but are unable to act in concert, and effect the intended movement.

Now *disposition*, or the art of grouping and combining the figures, and several parts of a picture is an essential, which contributes greatly to produce a *whole* in painting. When the parts are scattered, they have no dependance on each other ; they are still only parts : but by an agreeable group-

grouping, they are massed together, and become a *whole*.

In disposing figures great artifice is necessary to make each group open itself in such a manner, as to set off advantageously the several figures, of which it is composed. The *action* at least of each figure should appear.

No group can be agreeable without *contrast*. By *contrast* is meant the opposition of one part to another. A sameness in attitude, action, or expression, among figures in the same group, will always disgust the eye. In the cartoon of St. PAUL *preaching at Athens*, the contrast among the figures is incomparably fine; and the
want

want of it, *in the death of ANANIAS*, makes the group of the apostles a disagreeable one.

Nor indeed is *contrast* required only among the *figures* of the *same* group, but also among the *groups themselves*, and among *all the parts*, of which the piece is composed. In the *beautiful gate of the temple*, the figures of the principal group are very well contrasted; but the adjoining group is disposed almost in the same manner; which, together with the formal pillars, introduce a disagreeable regularity into the picture.

The judicious painter, however, whether he group, combine, or contrast,

traft, will always avoid the *appearance* of *artifice*. The feveral parts of his picture will be fo fuited to each other, that his art will feem the refult of chance. In the *facrifice at Lyftra*, the head of the ox is bowed down, with a defign, no doubt, to group the figures around it more harmonioufly ; but their action is fo well fuited to the pofture of the ox, and the whole managed with fo much judgment, that altho' the figures are difpofed with the utmoft art, they appear with all the eafe of nature. The remaining part of the group is an inftance of the reverse, in which a number of heads appear manifefly ftuck in to fill up vacuities.

But

But farther, as a *whole*, or *unity*, is an essential of beauty, *that disposition* is certainly the most perfect, which admits but of *one* group. All subjects, however, will not allow this *close* observance of unity. When this is the case, the several groups must again be combined, chiefly by a proper distribution of light, so as constitute a *whole*.

But as the *whole* will soon be lost, if the constituent *parts* become *numerous*, it follows, that *many* groups must not be admitted. Judicious painters have thought *three* the utmost number, that can be allowed. Some subjects indeed, as battles, and triumphs, necessarily require a great number of figures, and of course
various

various combinations of groups. In the management of *such* subjects, the greatest art is necessary to preserve a *whole*. Confusion in the figures must be expressed without confusion in the picture. A writer should treat his subject *clearly*, tho' he write upon *obscurity*.

With regard to *disposition*, I shall only add, that the *shape* or *form* of the group should also be considered. The *triangular* form MICHAEL ANGELO thought the most beautiful. And indeed there is a lightness in it, which no other form can receive. The group of the apostles, in the cartoon of *giving the keys*, and the same group, in the *death of Ananias*, are both exceedingly heavy, and this heaviness
arises

arises from nothing more than from the form of a parallelogram, within the lines of which these groups are contained. The triangular form too is capable of the most variety: for the vertical angle of a group so disposed may either be acute, or obtuse, in any degree. Or a *segment* only of a triangle may be taken, which still increases the variety. The cartoons afford few instances of beauty in the *forms* of *groups*. In the works of Salvator Rosa we frequently find them.

The painter, when he hath chosen his subject, should always scetch out some beautiful form of grouping, which may best suit it; within which bounds he should, as nearly as may be,

be, without affectation, confine his figures. What I mean, is, that the *form* of the group should never be left at random.

A third thing to be considered in a picture, with regard to a *whole*, is *keeping*. This word implies the different degrees of strength and faintness, which objects receive from nearness and distance. A nice observance of the gradual fading of light and shade contributes greatly towards the production of a *whole*. Without it, the distant parts, instead of being connected with the objects at hand, appear like foreign objects, wildly introduced, and unconnected. Diminished in *size* only, they put you in

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mind

mind of Lilliput and Brobdignag united in one scene. *Keeping* is generally found in great perfection in DELLA BELLA's prints; and the want of it as conspicuously in TEMPESTA's.

Nearly allied to *keeping* is the doctrine of *harmony*, which equally contributes towards the production of a *whole*. In *painting*, the practice of this doctrine has amazing force. A judicious arrangement of according tints will strike even the unpracticed eye. The *effect* of every picture, in a great measure, depends on one principal and master-tint, which prevails over the whole. Sometimes the purple tint is chosen: sometimes the mellow, brown one; and in some subjects the greenish hue is most proper.

proper. Of this ruling tint, whatever it is, every object in the picture should in a degree participate. This theory is founded on principles of truth, and produces a fine effect from the *harmony*, in which it unites every object.—But altho' *harmony* shews its effect chiefly in *painting*, yet in some measure the effect of *prints* may be assisted by it. Unless they are harmonized by the same *tone of shadow*, if I may so express myself, there will always appear a great deficiency in them. By the same *tone of shadow*, I mean not only the *same manner* of execution, but an *uniform* degree of strength. We often meet with hard touches in a print, which, standing alone, are unharmonious; but when every contiguous part is touched up

to that *tone*, the *whole* is in unison.

—*Keeping* then proportions a proper degree of strength to the near and distant parts, in respect to *each other*.

Harmony goes a step farther, and keeps each part quiet, with respect to itself, and the *whole*. I shall only add, that in scetches, and rough etchings no *harmony* is expected : it is enough, if *keeping* be observed. *Harmony* is looked for only in finished compositions. If you would see the want of it in the strongest light, examine a worn-print, harshly retouched by some bungler.

The last thing, which contributes to produce a *whole*, is a proper *distribution of light*. This, in a print especially, is most essential. An harmony

mony in the colouring may, in some measure, supply its place in painting; but a print has no succidaneum. Were the *design*, *disposition*, and *keeping* ever so perfect, beautiful, and just, without this essential, instead of a whole, we should have only a piece of patch-work. Nay, such is the power of *light*, that by an artificial management of it we may even harmonize a bad disposition.

The general rule, which regards the distribution of *light*, is, that it should be spread in *large masses*. This gives us the idea of a *whole*. Every grand object catches the light only upon one large surface. Where the light is spotted, we have the idea of several objects; or at least of an in-

C 3 coherent

coherent one, if the object be single; which the eye surveys with difficulty. It is thus in painting. When we see, upon a *comprehensive* view, *large masses* of light and shade, we have, of course, the idea of a *whole* — of *unity* in that picture. But where the light is scattered, we have the idea of several objects, or at least of one broken and confused. TITIAN'S known illustration of this point by a bunch of grapes is beautiful, and explanatory. When the light falls upon the *whole bunch* together (one side being illumined, and the other dark) we have the representation of those large masses, which constitute a *whole*. But when the grapes are stripped from the bunch, and scattered upon a table (the light shining
upon

upon each separately) a *whole* is no longer preserved.

Having thus considered those essentials of a print, which produce a *whole*, it remains to consider those, which relate to the *parts* — *drawing*, *expression*, *grace*, and *perspective*. With regard to these, let it be first observed, that, in order, they are inferior to the other. The production of a *whole* is the great effect, that should be aimed at in a picture: a picture without a *whole* is properly only a study: and those things, which produce a *whole* are of course the *principal* foundation of beauty.

By *drawing* we mean the exactness of the out-line. Without a compe-

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tent

tent knowledge of this there can be no just representation of nature. Every thing will be distorted, and offensive to the eye. Bad drawing therefore is that disgusting object, which

Non homines, non dii, non concessere columnæ.

Drawing, however, may be very tolerable, though it fall short in a certain degree, of absolute perfection. The defect will only be observed by the most critical and anatomical eye : and I may venture to say, that drawing is ranked too high, when the *niceties* of it are considered in preference to those essentials, which constitute a *whole*.

Expression is the life and soul of painting. It implies a just representation

tation of *passion*, and of *character* : of *passion*, by exhibiting every emotion of the mind, as outwardly discovered by any peculiarity of gesture ; or the extention, and contraction of the features : of *character*, by representing the different manners of men, as arising from their particular tempers, or professions. The cartoons are full of examples of the first kind of *expression* ; and with regard to the second, commonly called *manners-painting*, it would be invidious not to mention our countryman HOGARTH ; whose works contain a variety of characters, *represented* with more force than most men can *conceive* them.

Grace consists in such a disposition
of

of the parts of a figure, as forms it into an agreeable attitude. It depends on *contrast* and *ease*. *Contrast*, when applied to a single figure, means the same, as when applied to a group; the opposition of one part to another. It may be considered with reference to the *body*, the *limbs*, and the *head*; the graceful attitude arising sometimes from a contrast in one, sometimes in another, and sometimes in all. With reference to the *body*, contrast consists in giving it an easy turn, opposing concave parts to convex. Of this, St. PAUL in *the sacrifice at Lystra* is an instance. — With reference to the *limbs*, it consists in the opposition between extension and contraction. MICHAEL ANGELO's illustration by a triangle, or pyramid,

pyramid, may here likewise again be introduced; this form giving grace and beauty to a *single figure*, as well as to a *group*. Only here a greater liberty may be allowed. In *grouping*, the triangle must always rest upon its base; but in a single figure, it may be inverted, and stand upon its apex. Thus if the lower parts of the figure be extended, the upper parts should be contracted; but the same beautiful form is given by extending the arms, and drawing the feet to a point.—Lastly, contrast often arises from the air of the head; which is given by a turn of the neck from the line of the body. The cartoons abound with examples of this kind of *grace*. It is very remarkable in the figure of St. JOHN
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healing the cripple; and the same cartoon affords eight or nine more instances. I say the less on this subject, as it hath been so well explained by the ingenious author of the *Analysis of Beauty*.

Thus *contrast* is the foundation of *grace*; but it must ever be remembered, that *contrast* should be accompanied with *ease*. The body should be *turned*, not *twisted*; every *constrained* posture avoided; and every motion such, as nature, which loves ease, would dictate.

What hath been said on this head relates equally to *all* figures; those drawn from *low*, as well as those from *high* life. And here I would distinguish

guish between *picturesque* grace, and that grace which arises from *dignity of character*. Of the *former* kind, which is the kind here treated of, *all* figures should partake: you find it in BERGHEM's clowns, and in CALLOT's beggars: but it belongs to *expression* to mark those characteristics, which distinguish the *latter*.

I shall only observe farther, that when the piece consists of many figures, the contrast of *each single* figure should be subordinate to the contrast of the *whole*. It will be improper therefore, in many cases, to practice the rules, which have been just laid down. They ought, however to be a general direction to the painter ;

painter; and at least to be observed in the *principal* figures. — If a *single* figure be introduced, as in portrait, the pyramidal form cannot well be dispensed with. The figure partakes then of the nature of a group.

Perspective is that proportion, with regard to *size*, which near and distant objects, with their parts, bear to each other. It answers to *keeping*: one gives the out-line; and the other fills it up. Without a competent knowledge of *perspective*, very absurd things would be introduced: and yet to make a vain shew of it is pedantic. —

Under this head may be reduced *fore-shortning*. Unless this be done with the utmost art, it were better omitted: it will otherwise occasion
great

great awkwardness. RUBENS is famous for *fore-shortning*; but the effect is chiefly seen in his *paintings*; seldom in his *prints*.

To this summary of the rules, which relate to the *whole* of a picture, and to its *parts*, I shall just add a few observations upon *execution*; which relates equally to both.

By *execution* is meant that manner of working, by which each artist produces his effect. Artists may differ in their *execution* or *manner*, and yet all excel. CALLOT, for instance, uses a strong, firm stroke; SALVATOR, a slight, and loose one; while REMBRANDT executes in a manner different from them both, by scratches seemingly at random.

Every

Every artist is in some degree a *mannerist* ; that is, he executes in a *manner* peculiar to himself. But the word *mannerist* has generally a closer sense. Nature should be the standard of imitation ; and every object should be executed, as nearly as possible, in *her manner*. Thus SALVATOR's figures, DU JARDIN's animals, and WATERLO's landships, are all strongly impressed with the character of nature. Other masters again, deviating from this standard, instead of nature, have recourse only to their own ideas. They have gotten a general idea of a man, a horse, or a tree ; and to these ideas they apply upon all occasions. Instead therefore of representing that endless variety, which nature exhibits

bits on every subject, a sameness runs through all their performances. Every figure, and every tree bears the same stamp. Such artists are *properly* called *mannerists*. TEMPEST, CALLOT, and TESTA are all *mannerists* of this kind. Their ideas are plainly no copies from nature. PERELLE's landscapes too are mere transcripts of imagination. — The artist however, who copies nature, if he make a bad choice (as REMBRANDT often did) is less agreeable, than the *mannerist*, who gives us his own elevated ideas, touched with spirit and character, tho' not with exact truth. He is the true artist, who copies nature; but, where he finds her mean, elevates her from his own ideas of beauty. Such was SALVATOR.

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By the *spirit* and *freedom* of execution, we mean something, which it is difficult to explain. A certain heaviness always follows, when the artist is not sure of his stroke, and cannot execute his idea with precision. The reverse is the case, when he is certain of it, and gives it boldly. I know not how to explain better what is meant by *spirit*. Mere *freedom* a quick execution will give ; but unless that *freedom* be attended with precision, the stroke, however free, will be so unmeaning as to lose its effect.

To these observations, it may not be improper to add a short comparative view of the *peculiar* excellences of pictures, and prints, which will
shew

shew us in what points the picture has the advantage.

In *design* and *composition* the effects of both are equal. The print exhibits them with as much force and meaning as the picture.

In *keeping* the picture has the advantage. The *haziness* of distance cannot well be expressed by any thing, but the *hue of nature*, which the pencil is very able to give. The print *endeavours* to preserve this haziness; and to give the idea: but the idea is very imperfect. It is little more than an aid to memory. We know the appearance exists in nature; and the print furnishes an hint to recollect it.

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In

In the *distribution of light* the comparison runs very wide. Here the painter avails himself of a thousand varied tints, which assist him in this business ; and by which he can harmonize his gradations from light to shade with an almost infinite variety. An harmonious colouring has in itself indeed the effect of a proper distribution of light. The engraver, in the mean time, is left to work out his effect with two materials only, plain white and black.—In the print however you can more easily trace the *principles* of light and shade. The pencil is the implement of deception ; and it requires the eye of a master to distinguish between the effect of light, and the mere effect of colour : but in the print, even the unpractised
 eye

eye can readily catch the mass ; and follow the distribution of it through all its variety of middle tints. —

One thing more may be added on this head : If the picture have no harmony in its colouring, the tints being all at discord among themselves, which is very often the case in the works of reputable painters, a good print from such a picture, is more beautiful than the picture itself. It preserves what is valuable, (upon a supposition there is any thing valuable in it,) and removes what is offensive.

Thus the comparison runs with regard to those essentials, which relate to a *whole* : with regard to *drawing, expression, grace, and perspective*, we can pursue it only in the

two former: in the two latter, the picture and the print seem to have equal advantages. — With regard to *perspective* indeed, the lines of the print verging all to one point, may mark the *principles* of it more strongly.

Drawing, in a *picture*, is effected by the contiguity of two different colours: in a *print* by a positive line. In the *picture*, therefore, *drawing* has more of nature in it, and more of effect: but the student in anatomy finds more precision in the print; and can more easily trace the line, and follow it in all its windings through light and shade. — In *met-zotinto* indeed the comparison fails; in which species of prints, drawing
is

is effected nearly as it is in painting.

With regard to *expression*, the painter glories in his many advantages. The passions receive their force almost as much from *colour*, as from the emotion of feature. Nay lines, without colour, have frequently an effect very opposite to what is intended. Violent expressions, when lineal only, become often grotesque. The complexion should support the distortion. The bloated eyes of immoderate grief degenerate into coarse features, unless the pencil add those high-blown touches, which mark the passion. Ask the engraver, why he could not give the dying faint of DOMINICHINO

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his

his true expression ?* Why he gave him that ghastly horror, instead of the serene langour of the original ? The engraver may with justice say, he went as far as lines could go ; but he wanted DOMINICHINO's pencil to give those pallid touches, which alone could make his lines expressive. — Age also, and sex, the bloom of youth ; and the wan cheek of sickness, are equally indebted, in representation, for their most characteristic marks, to the pencil. — In *portrait*, the different hues of hair, and complexion ; — in *animal-life* the various dies of furs, and plu-

* JAC FREII's copy of DOMINICHINO's St. Jerome.

image — in *landskip*, the peculiar tints of seasons; of morning, and evening; the light azure of a summer's sky; the sultry glow of noon; the bluish, or purple tinge, which the mountain assumes, as it recedes, or approaches; the grey moss upon the ruin; the variegated greens, and mellow browns of foliage, and broken ground; in short, the colours of every part of nature, have all amazing force in strengthening the expression of objects. — In the room of all this, the deficient print has only to offer mere form, and the gradations of simple light. Hence the sweet touches of the pencil of CLAUDE, mark his pictures with the strongest expressions of nature, and render them invaluable; while
his

his prints are the dirty shapes of something, which he could not express.

The idea also of *distant magnitude* the print gives only very imperfectly. It is expressed chiefly by colour. Air, which is naturally blue, is the medium, through which we see; and every object participates of this blueness. When the distance is small, the tinge is imperceptible: as it increases, the tinge grows stronger; and when the object is very remote, it entirely loses its natural colour, and becomes blue. And indeed this is so familiar a criterion of distance, at least, with those, who live in mountainous countries, that if the object be visible at all, after it has received

received the full *ether-tinge*, if I may so speak, the sight immediately judges it to be very large. The eye ranging over the plains of Egypt, and catching the blue point of a pyramid, from the colour concludes the distance; and is struck with the magnitude of an object, which, through such a space, can exhibit form. —Here the print fails: this criterion of distant magnitude, it is unable to give.

The print equally fails, when the medium itself receives a foreign tinge from a strength of colour behind it. The idea of horror impressed by an expanse of air glowing, in the night, with distant fire, cannot be raised by black and white. VANDERVELDE has
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contrived to give us a good idea of the dreadful glare of a fleet in flames : but it were ridiculous for an engraver to attempt such a subject ; because he cannot express that idea, which principally illustrates his story.

Transparency is another thing which the print is very unable to express. It is the united tinge of two colours, one behind the other, each of which, in part, discovers itself singly. If you employ one colour only, you have the idea of opaqueness. A fine carnation is a white transparent skin, spread over a multitude of small blood vessels, which blush through it. When the breath departs, these little fountains of life flow no longer ; the
bloom

bloom fades ; and livid paleness, the colour of death, succeeds. — The happy pencil can mark both these effects. It can spread the glow of health over the cheek of beauty ; and it can with equal facility express the cold, wan tint of human clay. The print can express neither ; representing, in the same dry manner, the bright transparency of the one, and the inert opaqueness of the other.

Lastly, the print fails in the expression of *polished bodies* ; which are indebted for their chief lustre to *reflected colours*. The print indeed goes farther here, than in the case of transparency. In this it can do very little :

little : in *polished bodies*, it can at least give *reflected shapes*. It can shew the *forms* of hanging woods upon the edges of the lake ; tho' it is unable to give the kindred tinge. But in many cases the *polished* body receives the *tinge*, without the *shape*. Here the engraver is wholly deficient : he knows not how to stain the gleaming silver with the purple liquor it contains ; nor is he able to give the hero's armour its highest polish from the tinge of the crimson vest, which covers it.

A single word upon the subject of *execution*, shall conclude these remarks. Here the advantage lies wholly on the side of painting. *That* manner, which can best give the idea
of

of the surface of an object, is the best ; and the lines of the finest engraving are harsh in comparison of the smooth flow of the pencil. *Metzotinto*, tho' deficient in some respects, is certainly in others the happiest manner of execution ; and the ancient *wooden print*, in which the middle tint is used, is undoubtedly in point of execution, beyond either etching or engraving.

C H A P.



CHAPTER II.

Observations on the different Kinds of Prints,

THERE are three kinds of prints,
engravings, etchings, and met-
zotintors. The characteristic of the
 first is *strength*; of the second *free-*
dom; and of the third, *softness*. All
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these however may in some degree be found in each.

From the shape of the engraver's tool, each stroke is an angular incision; which form must of course give the line strength, and firmness, if it be not very tender. From such a line also, as it is a deliberate one, correctness may be expected; but no great freedom: for it is a laboured line, ploughed through the metal, and must necessarily, in a degree, want ease.

Unlimited *freedom*, on the other hand, is the characteristic of *etching*. The needle, gliding along the surface of the copper, meets no resistance, and easily takes any turn, the
hand

hand pleases to give it. Etching indeed is mere drawing; and may be practised with the same facility, — But as *aqua-fortis* bites in an *equable* manner, it cannot give the lines that strength, which they receive from a pointed graver, cutting into the copper. Besides, it is difficult to prevent it's biting the plate *all over* alike. The *distant parts* indeed may easily be covered with wax, and the grand effect of the *keeping* preserved; but to give each smaller part its proper relief, and to *harmonize* the *whole*, requires so many different degrees of strength, such easy transitions from one into another, that *aqua-fortis* alone is not equal to it. Here therefore engraving hath the advantage, which by a

stroke deep, or tender, at the artists pleasure, can vary strength and faintness in any degree,

As engraving therefore and etching have their respective advantages, and deficiencies, artists have endeavoured to unite their powers, and correct the faults of each, by joining the *freedom* of the one, with the *strength* of the other. In most of our modern prints, the plate is first etched, and afterwards strengthened, and finished by the engraver. And when this is *well* done, it has a happy effect. That flatness, which is the consequence of an equable strength of shade, is taken off; and the print gains a new effect by the relief given to those parts, which

hang

hang (in the painter's language) upon the parts behind to them. — But great art is necessary in this business. We see many a print, which wanted only a *few* touches, when it appeared in its etched proof, receive afterwards so *many*, as to become laboured, heavy, and disgusting.

It is a rare thing to meet with a print *entirely engraved*, which is free from stiffness. A celebrated master of our own indeed hath found the art of giving freedom to the stroke of a graver; and hath displayed great force of execution upon works by no means worthy of him: as if he were determined to shew the world he could stamp a value upon any thing. — But such artists are

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rarely

rarely found. *Mere engravers*, in general, are little better than *mere mechanics*.

In *etching*, we have a greater variety of excellent prints. The case is, it is so much the same as drawing, that we have the very works themselves of the most celebrated masters; many of whom have left behind them prints in this way; which, however slight and incorrect, will always have something *masterly*, and of course *beautiful* in them.

In the muscling of human figures of any considerable size, *engraving* hath undoubtedly the advantage of *etching*. The soft and delicate transitions,

sitions, from light to shade, which are there required, cannot be so well expressed by the needle : and in general, *large prints* require a strength, which *etching* cannot give, and are therefore fit objects of *engraving*.

Etching, on the other hand, is more particularly adapted to sketches, and slight designs ; which, if executed by an engraver, would entirely lose their freedom ; and with it their beauty. Landskip too, in general, is the object of *etching*. The foliage of trees, ruins, sky, and indeed every part of landskip requires the utmost freedom. In finishing an *etched* landskip with the *tool* (as it is called) too much care cannot be taken to prevent heaviness. We re-

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marked

marked before the nicety of touching upon an etched plate; but in landskip the business is peculiarly delicate. The fore-grounds may require a few strong touches, and the boles of such trees as are placed upon them; and here and there a few harmonizing strokes will add to the effect; but if the engraver ventures much farther, he has good luck, if he do no mischief.

An *engraved* plate, unless it be cut very slightly, will cast off five hundred good impressions. An *etched* one will not give above two hundred; unless it be eaten very deep, and then it may perhaps give three hundred. After that, the plate must
be

be retouched, or the impressions will be faint.

Besides the common method of engraving on *copper*, we have prints engraved on pewter, and on wood. The pewter plate gives a coarseness and dirtiness to the print, which is disagreeable. But engraving upon wood is capable of great beauty. Of this species of engraving more shall elsewhere be said.

Metzotinto is very different from either *engraving* or *etching*. In these you make the *shades*; in *metzotinto*, the *lights*.

Since the time of its invention by
Prince

Prince RUPERT, as is commonly supposed, the art of scraping *metzotintos* is greatly more improved than either of its sister-arts. Some of the earliest *etchings* are perhaps the best; and *engraving*, since the times of GOLTZIUS and MULLER, hath not perhaps made any very great advances. But *metzotinto*, compared with its original state, is, at this day, almost a new art. If we examine some of the modern pieces of workmanship in this way, the *Jewish Rabbi*, the portrait of Mrs. LASCELLES, *with a child on her knee*, Mr. GARRICK *between Tragedy and Comedy*, and several other prints by some of our best metzotinto-scrappers, they almost as much exceed the works of WHITE and SMITH; as
those

those masters did BECKET and SIMONS. As to Prince RUPERT's works, I never saw any, which were *certainly* known to be his; but I make no doubt they were executed in the same black, harsh, disagreeable manner, which appears so strong in the masters, who succeeded. The invention however was noble; and the early masters have the credit of it: but the truth is, the ingenious mechanic hath been called in to the painter's aid, and hath invented a manner of *laying ground*, wholly unknown to the earlier masters: and they who are acquainted with *met-zotinto*, know the *ground* to be a very capital consideration.

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The characteristic of *metzotinto* is *softness*, which adapts it chiefly to portrait, or history with a few figures, and these not too small. Nothing, except paint, can express flesh more naturally, or the flowing of hair, or the folds of drapery, or the catching lights of armour. In engraving and etching we must get over the prejudices of cross lines, which exist on no natural bodies : but *metzotinto* gives us the strongest representation of a *surface*. If however the figures are too crowded, it wants strength to detach the several parts with a proper relief : and if they are very small, it wants precision, which can only be given by an outline ; or, as in painting, by a different tint. The unevenness of the ground

ground will occasion bad drawing, and awkwardness — in the extremities especially. Some inferior artists have endeavoured to remedy this by terminating their figures with an engraved, or etched line : but they have tried the experiment with bad success. The strength of the line, and the softness of the ground, accord ill together. I speak not here of such a judicious mixture of *etching* and *metzotinto*, as WHITE formerly used, and such as our best metzo-tinto-scrapers at present use, to give a strength to particular parts; I speak only of a harsh, and injudicious lineal termination,

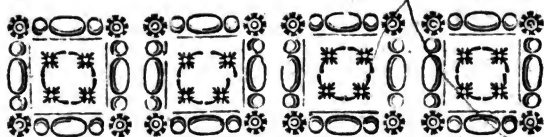
Metzotinto

Metzotinto excells each of the other species of prints in its capacity of receiving the most beautiful effects of light and shade: as it can the most happily unite them by blending them together. — Of this REMBRANDT seems to have been aware. He had probably seen some of the first metzotintos; and admiring the effect, endeavoured to produce it in etching by a variety of intersecting scratches.

You cannot well cast off more than an hundred good impressions from a metzotinto plate. The rubbing of the hand soon wears it smooth. And yet by constantly repairing it, it may be made to give
four

four or five hundred with tolerable strength. The first impressions are not always the best. They are too black and harsh. You will commonly have the best impressions from the fiftieth to the seventieth : the harsh edges will be softened down ; and yet there will be spirit and strength enough left.

CHAPTER



CHAPTER III.

Characters of the most noted Masters.

MASTERS IN HISTORY.

ALBERT DURER, tho' not the inventor, was one of the first improvers of the art of engraving. He was a German painter; and at the same time a Man of letters, and

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a philosopher. It may be added in his praise, that he was an intimate friend of the great Erasmus ; who revised, it is supposed, some of the pieces which he published. He was a man of business also ; and for many years was the leading magistrate of Nuremburgh. — His prints, considered as the first efforts of a new art, have great merit. Nay, we may add, that it is astonishing to see a new art, in its first essay, carried to such a length. In some of those prints, which he executed on copper, the engraving is elegant to a great degree. His *Hell-scene* particularly, which was engraved in the year 1513, is as high-finished a print as ever was engraved, and as happily finished. The labour he has

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bestowed upon it, has it's full effect. In his wooden prints too we are surprized to see, in so early a master, so much meaning, and relief; the heads so well marked; and every part so well executed. — This artist seems to have understood very well the principles of design. His composition too is often pleasing; and his drawing generally good: but he knows very little of the management of light; and still less of grace: and yet his ideas are purer, and more elegant, than we could have supposed from the awkward archetypes, which his country and education afforded. In a word, he was certainly a Man of a very extensive genius; and, as *Vasari* remarks, would have been an extraordinary artist, if he

F 2 had

had had an Italian, instead of a German education. His prints are very numerous. They were much admired in his own life-time, and eagerly bought up; which put his wife, who was a teizing woman, upon urging him to spend more time upon engraving, than he was inclined to do. He was very rich, and chose rather to practice his art as an amusement, than as a business. He died in the year 1527.

The immediate successors, and imitators of ALBERT DURER were LUCAS VAN LEIDEN, ALDGRAVE, PENS, HISBEN, and some others of less note. Their works are very much in their master's style; and were the admiration of an age, which
 had

had seen nothing better. The best of ALDGRAVE's works are two or three small pieces of the story of Lot.

GOLTZIUS flourished a little after the death of these masters; and carried engraving to a great height. He was a native of Germany, where he learned his art; but travelling afterwards into Italy, he there improved his ideas. You plainly discover in him, a mixture of the Flemish and Italian schools. His forms have sometimes a degree of elegance in them; but, in general the Dutch master predominates. GOLTZIUS is often happy in *design* and *disposition*; and fails most in the *distribution of light*. But his chief excellence

F 3

lies

lies in *execution*. He engraves with a noble, firm, expressive line, which hath scarce been excelled by any succeeding masters. There is a variety too in his manner, which is very pleasing. His print of *the circumcision* is one of the best of his works. The story is well told, the groups agreeably disposed; and the execution admirable; but the figures are Dutch; and the whole, through the want of a proper distribution of shade, is only a glaring mass.

MULLER ingraved very much in the style of GOLTZIUS; and yet with a still bolder, and firmer stroke. We have no where greater masterpieces in execution, than the works of this artist exhibit. The *baptism*
of

of JOHN is perhaps the most beautiful specimen of bold engraving, that is extant.

ABRAHAM BLOEMART was a Dutch master also, and contemporary with GOLTZIUS. We are not informed what particular means of improvement he had; but it is certain he designed in a more elegant taste, than any of his countrymen. His figures are often graceful; excepting only, that he gives them sometimes an affected twist; which is still more conspicuous in the fingers: an affectation which we sometimes also find in the prints of GOLTZIUS. — The *resurrection of LAZARUS* is one of BLOEMART's master pieces; in which are many

F 4

faults,

faults, and many beauties; both very characteristic.

While the Dutch masters were thus carrying the art of engraving to so great an height, it was introduced into Italy by ANDREA MANTEGNA; to whom the Italians ascribe the invention of it. The paintings of this master, tho' they abound in noble passages, are formal and disagreeable. We have a specimen of them at Hampton-Court in the triumph of JULIUS CÆSAR.—His prints, which are said to have been engraved on tin-plates, are transcripts from the same ideas. We see in them the chaste, correct outline, and noble simplicity of the Roman school: but we are to expect
nothing

nothing more ; not the least attempt towards an agreeable *whole*. — And indeed we shall perhaps find in general, that the masters of the Roman school were more studious of those essentials of painting, which regard the *parts* ; and the Flemish masters of those, which regard the *whole*. The former therefore drew better *figures* ; the latter made better *pictures*.

M A N T E G N A was succeeded by P A R M I G I A N O and P A L M A, both masters of great reputation. P A R M I G I A N O having formed the most accurate taste upon a thorough study of the works of R A P H A E L and M I C H A E L A N G E L O, published many of his figures, rather than designs
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engraved on wood, which abounded with every kind of beauty; if we may form a judgment of them from the few which we sometimes meet with. Whither PARMIGIANO invented the art of engraving upon wood, does not certainly appear. His pretensions to the invention of etching are less disputable. In this way he published many slight pieces, which do him great credit. In the midst of his labours, he was interrupted by a knavish engraver, who pillaged him of all his plates. Unable to bear the loss, he foreswore his art, and abandoned himself to chymistry.

PALMA

PALMA was too much employed as a painter to have much leisure for etching. He hath left however several prints behind him, which are remarkable for the delicacy of the drawing, and the freedom of the execution. He etches in a very loose but masterly manner. His prints are scarce; and indeed we seldom meet with any, that deserve more than the name of sketches.

FRANCIS PARRIA seems to have copied the manner of PALMA with great success. But his prints are still more scarce than his master's; nor have we a sufficient number of them to enable us to form a judgment of his merit.

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But the great improver of the art of engraving upon wood, and who at once carried it to a degree of perfection, which hath not since been exceeded was ANDREA ANDREANI of Mantua. The works of this master are remarkable for the freedom, strength, and spirit of the execution; the elegant correctness of the drawing; and in general for their effect. Few prints come so near the idea of painting. They have a force, which a pointed tool upon copper cannot reach; and the wash, of which the middle tint is composed, adds all the softness of drawing. The works of this master indeed are seldom seen in perfection. They are scarce; and when we do meet with them, it is a chance if the
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the impressions be good : and very much of the beauty of these prints depends on the goodness of the impression. For often the outline is left hard, the middle tint being lost ; and sometimes the middle tint is left without it's proper termination.

Among the ancient Italian masters, we cannot omit MARK ANTONIO, and AUGUSTIN of Venice. They are both celebrated ; and have handed down to us many engravings from the works of RAPHAEL : but their *antiquity*, not their *merit*, seems to have recommended them. Their execution is harsh, and formal to the last degree ; and if their prints give us any idea of the works of RAPHAEL, we may well wonder,

as

as PICART observes, how that master got his reputation.

FREDERIC BAROCCHI was born at Urbin, where the genius of RAPHAEL inspired him. In his early youth he travelled to Rome: and giving himself up to intense study, he acquired a great name in painting. At his leisure hours he etched a few prints from his own designs, which are highly finished, and executed with great softness and delicacy. The *Salutation* is his capital performance; of which we seldom meet with any impressions, but those taken from the retouched plate, which are very harsh.

ANTHONY

ANTHONY TEMPESTA was a native of Florence, but resided chiefly at Rome ; where he was much employed as a painter by GREGORY XIII.

— His prints are very numerous ; all from his own designs. Battles and huntings are the subjects, in which he most delighted. His merit lies in expression, and drawing ; in the grandeur of his ideas, and an imagination exceedingly fertile. His figures are often elegant, and graceful ; and his heads marked with uncommon spirit, and correctness. His horses, tho' fleshy and ill-drawn, and evidently never copied from nature, are however noble animals ; and display an endless variety of beautiful actions. — His imperfections, at the same time, are very glaring. His
com-

composition is generally bad. Here and there you have a good group ; seldom an agreeable whole. He had not the art of preserving his backgrounds tender ; so that we are not to expect any effect of keeping. His execution is harsh ; and he is totally ignorant of the distribution of light. — But notwithstanding all his faults, such is his merit upon the whole, that, as studies at least, his prints deserve a much higher rank in the cabinets of connoisseurs, than they generally find.

AUGUSTIN CARRACHE has left a few etchings, which are admired for the delicacy of the drawing, and the freedom of the execution. But there is great flatness in them, and
want

want of strength. Etchings indeed in this style are rather meant as sketches, than finished prints.

GUIDO's etchings, most of which are small, are esteemed for the simplicity of the design ; the elegance and correctness of the outline ; and that grace, for which this master is so remarkable. The extremities of his figures are particularly touched with great accuracy. But we have the same spiritless flatness in the works of GUIDO, which we find in those of his master CARRACHE, accompanied at the same time with less freedom.

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CANTARINI copied the manner of GUIDO, as PARRA did that of PALMA ; and so happily, that it is often difficult to distinguish the works of these two masters.

CALLOT was little acquainted with any of the grand principles of painting : of composition, and the management of light he was totally ignorant. But tho' he could not make a picture, he was admirably skilled in drawing a figure. His attitudes are generally graceful, when they are not affected ; his expression strong ; his drawing correct ; and his execution masterly, tho' rather laboured. His *Fair* is a good epitome of his works. Considered as a *whole*, it is a confused jumble of ideas ; but the
parts

parts, separately examined, appear the work of a master. The same character may be given of his most famous work, the *Miseries of war*; in which there is more expression both in action and feature, than was ever perhaps shewn in so small a compass. And yet I know not whether his *Beggars* be not the more capital performance. In the *Miseries of war*, he aims at composition, in which he rarely succeeds: *His Beggars* are detached figures, in which lay his strength. — I shall only add, that a vein of drollery and humour runs through all his designs; which sometimes, when he chuses to indulge it freely, as in the *Temptation of St. ANTHONY*, displays itself in a very facetious manner.

COUNT GAUDE contracted a friendship at Rome with ADAM ELSHAMER, from whose designs he engraved a few prints. GAUDE was a young nobleman upon his travels; and never practised engraving as a profession. This would call for indulgence, if his prints had less merit; but in their way they are beautiful; tho' on the whole, formal, and unpleasant. They are highly finished, but void of all freedom. Moon-lights, and torch-lights are the subjects he chiefly chuses; and his great excellence lies in preserving the effects of these different lights. His prints are generally small. I know only one, the *Flight into Egypt*, of a larger size.

SALVATOR ROSA painted landskip more than history; but his *prints* are

are chiefly historical. He was bred a painter; and perfectly understood his art; if we except only the *management of light*, of which he seems to have been ignorant. The capital landskip of this master at Chiswick is a noble picture. The contrivance, the composition, the distances, the figures, and all the parts, and appendages of it are fine: but in point of light it might perhaps have been improved, if the middle ground, where the figures of the second distance stand, had been thrown into sunshine. — In *design*, and generally in *composition*, SALVATOR is very great. His figures, which he drew in exquisite taste, are graceful, and nobly expressive, beautifully grouped, and varied into the most agreeable attitudes. With regard indeed to the

legs of his figures, it must be owned, he is a *mannerist*. They are well drawn; but all cast in one mould. There is a stiffness too in the backs of his extended hands: the palms are beautiful. But these are trivial criticisms. — His *manner* is slight; so as not to admit either softness or effect: yet the simplicity and elegance of it are wonderfully pleasing; and bear that strong characteristic of a master's hand,

———— *sibi quivis*
Speret idem ———

One thing, in his manner of shading, is disagreeable. He will often shade a *face* half over with long lines; which, in so small, and delicate an object, gives an unpleasant abruptness. It is treating a face like an egg: no distinction of feature is observed.

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SALVATOR was a man of genius, and of learning ; both which he has found frequent opportunities of displaying in his works. His style is grand ; every object that he introduces is of the heroic kind ; and his subjects in general shew an intimacy with ancient history, and mythology.

A roving disposition, to which he is said to have given full scope, seems to have added a wildness to all his thoughts. We are told, he spent the early part of his life in a troop of banditti ; and that the rocky and desolate scenes, in which he was accustomed to take refuge, furnished him with those romantic ideas in landskip, of which he is so exceedingly fond ; and in the description of which he so greatly excels. His

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Robbers,

Robbers, as his detached figures are commonly called, are supposed also to have been taken from the life.

REMBRANDT'S excellency, as a painter, lay in colouring, which he possessed in such perfection, that it almost screens every fault in his pictures. His prints, deprived of this palliative, have only his inferior qualifications to recommend them. These are expression, and skill in the management of light, execution, and sometimes composition. I mention them in the order in which he seems to have possessed them. His expression has most force in the character of age. He marks as strongly as the hand of Time itself. He possesses too in a great degree, that inferior
kind

kind of expression, which gives its proper, and characteristic touch to drapery, fur, metal, and every object he represents. — His management of light consists chiefly in making a very strong contrast; which has often a good effect: and yet in many of his prints there is no effect at all; which gives us reason to think, he either had no principles; or published such prints before his principles were ascertained. — His execution is peculiar to himself. It is rough, or neat, as he meant a sketch, or a finished piece; but always free, and masterly. It produces its effect by strokes intersected in every direction; and comes nearer the idea of painting, than the execution of any other master.

Never

Never painter was more at a loss than REMBRANDT, for an idea of that species of grace, which is necessary to support an elevated character. While he keeps within the sphere of his genius, and contents himself with low subjects, he deserves any praise. But when he attempts beauty, or dignity, it were goodnatured to suppose, he means only burlesque and caricature. He is a strong contrast to SALVATOR. The one drew all his ideas from nature, as she appears with the utmost grace and elegance. The other caught her in her meanest images; and transferred those images into the highest characters. Hence SALVATOR exalts banditti into heroes: REMBRANDT degrades patriarchs into beggars.

REM-

REMBRANDT indeed seems to have affected awkwardness. He was a man of humour ; and would laugh at those artists who studied the antique. " I'll shew you my antiques," he would cry ; and then he would carry his friends into a room furnished with head-dresses, draperies, household-stuff, and instruments of all kinds : " These, he would add, are " worth all your antiques."

His best etching is that, which goes by the name of the *hundred-guildres-print* ; which is in such esteem, that I have known twenty guineas given for a good impression of it. In this all his excellencies are united ; and I might add, his imperfections also. Age and wretchedness are admirably described ;

described ; but the principal figure is ridiculously mean.

REMBRANDT is said to have left behind him near three hundred prints ; none of which are dated before M,DC,XXVIII ; none after M,DC,LIX. They were in such esteem, even in his own life-time, that he is said to have retouched some of them four, or five times.

PETER TESTA studied upon a plan very different from that either of SALVATOR or REMBRANDT. Those masters drew their ideas from nature : TESTA, from what he esteemed a superior model — the antique. Smit with the love of painting, this artist travelled to Rome in the habit of a pilgrim,

pilgrim, destitute of all the means of improvement, but what mere genius furnished. He had not even interest to procure a recommendation; nor had he any address to substitute in it's room. The works of sculpture fell most obviously in his way; and to those he applied himself with so much industry, copying them over, and again, that he is said to have gotten them all by heart. Thus qualified he took up the pencil. But he soon found the school, in which he had studied, a very insufficient one to form a painter. He had neglected colouring; and his pictures were in no esteem. Disappointed and mortified he threw aside his pallet, and applied himself to etching; in which he became a great proficient.

His

His prints are very valuable. We are seldom indeed to expect a coherency of design in any of them. An enthusiastic vein runs through most of his compositions; and it is not an improbable conjecture, that his head was a little disturbed. He generally crowds into his pieces such a jumble of inconsistent ideas, that it is difficult sometimes only to guess at what he aims. He was as little acquainted with the distribution of light, as with the rules of design: and yet notwithstanding all this, his works contain an infinite fund of entertainment. There is an exuberance of fancy in him, which, with all its wildness, is agreeable; his ideas are sublime and noble; his drawing most elegantly correct; his heads touched with

with infinite spirit, and expression; his figures graceful, rather too nearly allied to the antique; his groups often beautiful; and his execution, in his best etchings, for he is often unequal to himself, very masterly.* Perhaps no prints afford more useful studies for a painter.

The *procession of SILENUS*, if we may guess at so confused a design, may illustrate all that hath been said. The *whole* is as incoherent, as the *parts* are beautiful.

This unfortunate artist was drowned in the Tyber; and it is left uncertain, whether by accident or design.

* Some of his works are etched by CÆS. TESTA.

SPANIOLET etched a few prints in a very spirited manner. No master understood better the force of every touch. *SILENUS and BACCHUS*, and the *Martyrdom of St. BARTHOLOMEW*, are the best of his historical prints ; and yet these are inferior to some of his caricaturas, which are admirably executed.

MICHAEL DORIGNY, or OLD DORIGNY, as he is often called to distinguish him from NICHOLAS, had the misfortune to be the son in law of SIMON VOUET, whose works he engraved, and whose imperfections he copied. His execution is free, and he preserves the lights extremely well upon single figures : his drapery too is natural, and easy : but his drawing

drawing is below criticism; in the extremities especially. In this his master misled him. VOUET excelled in composition; of which we have many beautiful instances in DORIGNY's prints.

VILLAMENA was inferior to few engravers. If he be deficient in strength and effect, there is a delicacy in his manner, which is inimitable. One of his best prints is a *descent from the cross*.

But his works are so rare, that we can scarce form an adequate idea of his merit.

STEPHEN DE LA BELLA was a minute genius. His manner wants strength for any larger work; but

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in small objects it appears to advantage : there is great freedom in it, and uncommon neatness. His figures are touched with spirit ; and sometimes his composition is good : but he seldom discovers any skill in the management of light ; though the defect is less striking, because of the smallness of the pieces. His *Pont Neuf* will give us an idea of his works. Through the bad management of the light, it makes no appearance as a *whole* ; tho' the composition, if we except the modern architecture, is tolerable. But the figures are marked with great beauty ; and the distances extremely fine. — Some of his single heads are very elegant.

LA

LA FAGE's works consist chiefly of scetches. The great excellency of this master lay in drawing; in which he was perfectly skilled. However unfinished his pieces are, they discover him to have been admirably acquainted with anatomy and proportion. There is very little in him besides, that is valuable; grace, and expression sometimes; seldom composition: his figures are generally either too much crowded, or too diffuse. As for light and shade, he seems to have been totally ignorant of their effect, or he could never have shewn so bad a taste, as to publish his designs without at least a bare expression of the masses of each. Indeed we have positive proof, as well as negative. Where

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he has attempted an effect of light, he has shewn only how little he knew of it.

His genius chiefly displays itself in the gambols of nymphs and satyrs; in routs and revels: but there is so much obscenity in his works of this kind, that, altho' otherwise fine, they scarce afford an innocent entertainment.

In some of his prints, in which he has attempted the sublimest characters, he has given them a wonderful dignity. Some of his figures of Christ are not inferior to the ideas of RAPHAEL; and in a slight scetch, intituled, *Vocation de Moyse*, the Deity is introduced with surprizing majesty.

His

—His best works are slightly etched from his drawings by ERTINGER ; who has done justice to them.

BOLSWERT engraved the works of RUBENS, and in a stile worthy of his master. You see the same free, and animated manner in both. It is said that RUBENS touched his proofs; and it is probable; the ideas of the painter are so exactly transfused into the works of the engraver.

PONTIUS too engraved the works of RUBENS; and would have appeared a greater master, if he had not had such a competitor as BOLSWERT.

SCIAMINOSI etched a few small plates of the *mysteries of the rosary* in a masterly style. There is no great beauty in the composition ; but the drawing is good ; the figures are generally graceful ; and the heads touched with great spirit.

ROMAN LE HOOGHE is inimitable in execution. Perhaps no master etches in a freer and more spirited manner : there is a richness in it likewise, which we seldom meet with. His figures too are often good ; but his composition is generally faulty : it is crowded, and confused. He knows little of the effect of light. There is a flutter in him too, which hurts an eye pleased with simplicity.

simplicity. His prints are very historical. The *deluge at Coeverden* is finely described. — LE HOOGE was much employed by the authors of his time in composing frontispieces; some of which are very beautiful.

LUIKEN etches in the manner of LE HOOGE, but it is a less masterly manner. His *history of the bible* is a great work, in which there are many good figures, and great freedom of execution; but poor composition, much confusion, and little skill in the distribution of light. This master hath also etched a book of various kinds of capital punishments; amongst which there are many good prints.

GER-

GERRARD LAIRESSE etches in a loose, and unfinished ; but free, and masterly manner. His light is often well distributed ; but his shades have not sufficient strength to give his pieces effect. Though he was a Dutch painter, you see nothing of the Dutchman in his works. His composition is generally grand and beautiful, especially where he has only a few figures to manage. His figures themselves are graceful, and his expression strong. The simple and sublime ideas, which appear every where in his works, acquired him the title of the *Dutch* RAPHAEL ; a title which he very well deserves. LAIRESSE may be called an ethic painter. He commonly inculcates some truth either in morals, or religion ;

gion; which he illustrates by a Latin sentence at the bottom of his print. — It may be added, that his draperies are particularly excellent.

CASTIGLIONE was an Italian painter of some eminence. He drew human figures with grace and correctness; yet he generally chose such subjects, as would admit the introduction of animal life, which often makes the most distinguished part of his piece.

There is a simplicity in the designs of this master, which is very beautiful. In composition he excels greatly. Of his elegant groups we have many instances in a set of prints, etched from his paintings,
in

in a slight, free manner by C. MACEE; particularly in those of the *patriarchal journeyings*. He hath left us several of his *own* etchings also, which are very valuable. The subjects indeed of some of them are odd, and fantastical; and the composition not equal to some prints we have from his paintings by other hands; but the execution is greatly superior. Freedom, strength, and spirit are very eminent in them; and delicacy likewise, where he chuses to finish highly; of which we have some instances. — One of his best prints is the *entrance of Noah into the ark*. The composition; the distribution of light; the spirit and expression, with which the animals are touched; and the freedom of

of the execution are all admirable.

VANDER MUILEN has given us historical representations of several modern battles. His prints are generally large, and contain many good figures, and agreeable groups : but they have no effect, and seldom produce a *whole*. A disagreeable monotony (as the musical people speak) runs through them all.

OTHO VENIUS has entirely the air of an Italian, tho' of Dutch parentage. He had the honour of being the master of the celebrated RUBENS ; who chiefly learned from him his knowledge of light and shade. This artist published

lished a book of love-emblems, in which the Cupids are engraved with great spirit. His pieces of fabulous history have less merit.

MELLAN was a whimsical engraver. He shadowed entirely with parallel lines, which he winds round the muscles of his figures, and the folds of his draperies, with great variety, and beauty. His manner is soft and delicate, but void of strength and effect. His compositions of course make no *whole*, tho' his single figures are often elegant. His saints and statues are in general his best pieces. There is great expression in many of the former: and his drapery is often incomparable. One of his best prints is inscribed,

Per

Per se surgens: and another very good one with this strange passage from St. AUSTIN, *Ego evangelio non crederem, nisi me catholicæ ecclesiæ commoveret auctoritas*. — His head of Christ, effected by a single spiral line, is a masterly, but whimsical performance.

OSTADE's etchings, like his pictures, are admirable representations of low life. They abound in humour and expression, in which lies their great merit. They have little besides to recommend them. The composition is generally very indifferent; and the execution no way remarkable. Sometimes, and but seldom, you see a good effect of light.

COR-

CORNELIUS BEGA etches very much in the manner of OSTADE; but with more freedom.

VAN TULDEN has nothing of the Dutch master in his design; which seems formed upon the study of the antique. It is chaste, elegant, and correct. His manner is rather firm, and distinct, than free, and spirited. His principal work is *the voyage of ULYSSES in fifty-eight plates*; in which we have a great variety of elegant attitudes, excellent characters of heads, good drawing, and tho' not much effect, yet often good grouping. His drapery is heavy.

JOSEPH

JOSEPH PARROCFILLE painted battles for LEWIS XIV. He etched also several of his own designs. The best of his works are eight small battles, which are very scarce. Four of these are of a size larger than the rest; of which two, the *battle*, and *stripping the slain*, are very fine. Of the four smaller, that entitled *vesper* is the best. — His manner is rough, free, and masterly, and his knowledge of the effect of light considerable. — His greatest undertaking was the *Life of Christ* in a series of plates: but it is a hasty and incorrect work. Most of the prints are mere sketches; and many of them, even in that light, are bad; tho' the freedom of the manner is pleasing in the worst of them. The best
plates

plates are the 14th, 17th, 19th, 22d, 28th, 39th, 41st, 42d, and 43d.

V. LE FEBRE etched many designs from TITIAN and JULIO ROMANO, in a very miserable manner. His drawing is bad; his drapery frittered; his lights ill-preserved; and his execution disgusting: and yet we find his works in capital collections.

BELLANGE's prints are highly finished, and his execution is not amiss. His figures also have something in them, which looks like grace; and his light is tolerably well massed. But his heads are ill-set on; his extremities incorrectly touched; his figures badly proportioned; and

and in short, his drawing in general very bad.

CLAUDE GILLOT was a French painter ; but finding himself rivalled, he laid aside his pencil, and employed himself entirely in etching. His common subjects are *dances* and *revels*, in which he introduces satyrs, nymphs, and fawns. By giving his sylvens a peculiar cast of eye, he has introduced a new kind of character. The invention, and fancy of this master are very pleasing ; and his composition is often good. His manner is slight ; which is the best apology for his bad drawing.

WATTEAU has great defects, and, it must be owned, great merit. He

I abounds

abounds in all that flutter, and affectation, which is so disagreeable in the generality of French painters. But at the same time, we acknowledge, he draws well; gives grace and delicacy to his figures; and produces often a beautiful effect of light. I speak chiefly of such of his works, as have been engraved by others.—He etched a few slight plates himself with great freedom and elegance. The best of them are contained in a small book of figures in various dresses and attitudes.

CORNELIUS SCHUT excels chiefly in execution; sometimes in composition: but he knows nothing of grace; and has, upon the whole, but little merit.

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WIL-

WILLIAM BAUR etches with great spirit. His largest works are in the historical way. He has given us many of the sieges, and battles, which wasted Flanders in the sixteenth century. They *may* be exact, and probably they *are*; but they are rather plans than pictures; and have little to recommend them but historic truth, and the freedom of the execution. BAUR's best prints are some characters he has given us of different nations, in which the peculiarities of each are very well preserved. His OVID is a poor performance.

COYPEL hath left us a few prints of his own etching; the principal of which is an *Ecce homo*, touched with great spirit. Several of his own de-

signs he etched himself, and afterwards put into the hands of engravers to finish. It is probable he overlooked this work; but it is probable also, that we should have had better prints, if we had received them pure from his own needle. What they had lost in force, would have been amply made up in spirit.

PICART was one of the most ingenious of the French engravers. His *imitations* are among the most entertaining of his works. The cry, in his day, ran wholly in favour of antiquity: "No modern masters were worth looking at." PICART, piqued at such prejudice, etched several pieces in imitation of ancient masters; and so happily, that he almost

most out-did in their own excellencies, the artists whom he copied. These prints were much admired, as the works of GUIDO, REMBRANDT, and others. Having had his joke, he published them under the title of *Impostures innocentes*. — PICART's own manner is highly finished, yet, at the same time, rich, bold, and spirited. His prints are generally small; and most of them from the designs of others. One of the best is from that beautiful composition of POUSSIN, in which *Truth is delivered by Time, from Envy*.

ARTHUR POND, our countryman, succeeded admirably in this method of imitation; in which he hath etched several very valuable prints; particularly

larly two oval landships after SALVATOR — a monkey in red chalk after CARRACHE — two or three ruins after PANINI, and some others equally excellent.

But this method of imitation hath been most successfully practised by *Count CAYLUS*, an ingenious French nobleman, whose works in this way are very voluminous. He hath ransacked the French king's cabinet, and hath scarce left a master of any note, from whose drawings he hath not given us excellent prints. Inso-much, that if we had nothing remaining from those masters, but *Count CAYLUS's* works, we should not want a very sufficient idea of them. So versatile is his genius, that
with

with the same ease he presents us with an elegant outline from RAPHAEL, a rough sketch from REMBRANDT, and a delicate portrait from VANDYKE.

LE CLERC was an excellent engraver; but chiefly in the petite stile. He immortalized ALEXANDER, and LEWIS XIV. in miniature. His genius seldom exceeds the dimensions of six inches. Within those limits he can draw up twenty thousand men with great dexterity. No artist except CALLOT and DELLA BELLA could touch a small figure with so much spirit. He seems to have imitated CALLOT's manner, but his stroke is neither so firm, nor so masterly,

PETER BARTOLI etched with freedom; tho' his manner is not agreeable. His capital work is LANFRANK's gallery.

JAC. FREII is an admirable engraver. He unites in a great degree strength, and softness; and comes as near the force of painting, as an engraver can well do. He employed himself chiefly in copying; and has given us the strongest ideas of the works of several of the most eminent masters. He preserves the drawing, and expression of his original; and often perhaps improves the effect. You see him in perfection in a noble print from MARATTE, intitled, *In conspectu angelorum psallam tibi.*

S. GRI-

S. GRIBELIN is a careful, and laborious engraver; of no extensive genius; but painfully exact. His works are chiefly small; the principal of which are his copies from the Banqueting - House at Whitehall; and from the Cartoons. His manner is formal; yet he has contrived to preserve the spirit of his original. We have no copies of the cartoons so good as his. It is a pity he did not engrave them on a larger scale.

LE BAS etches in a clear, distinct, free manner; and has done great honour to the works of TENIERS, WOVERMAN, and BERGHEM, from whom he chiefly copied. The best of his works are after BERGHEM,

Bis-

BISCHOP's etching has something very pleasing in it. It is loose, and free ; and yet has strength, and richness. Many of his statues are good figures : the drawing is sometimes incorrect ; but the execution beautiful. Many of the plates of his drawing-book are very well. His greatest single work is the representation of JOSEPH *in Egypt* ; in which there are many faults, both in the drawing and effect ; some of which are chargeable upon him, and others upon the artist from whom he copied ; but upon the whole, it is a pleasing print.

FRANCIS PERRIER was the debauched son of a goldsmith in Franche-compte. His indiscretions
forcing

forcing him from home, his inclinations led him to Rome. His manner of travelling thither was whimsical. He joined himself to a blind beggar, whom he agreed to lead for half his alms. At Rome, he applied to painting, and made a much greater proficiency than could have been expected from his dissipated life. He published a large collection of statues, and other antiquities, which are etched in a very masterly manner. The drawing is often incorrect; but the attitudes are well chosen, and the execution spirited. Many of them seem to have been done hastily; but there are marks of genius in them all.

MAROT, who was architect to K.

WIL-

WILLIAM, hath etched some statues likewise in a very masterly manner. Indeed all his works are admirably executed ; but they consist chiefly of ornaments, in the way of his profession.

FRAN. ROETTIERS etches in a very bold manner, and with a good deal of spirit ; but there is a harshness in his outline, which is disagreeable ; tho' the less so, as his drawing is generally good. Few artists manage a crowd better ; or give it more effect by a proper distribution of light. Of this management we have some judicious instances in his two capital prints, the *Assumption of the cross*, and the *crucifixion*.

NICHO-

NICHOLAS DORIGNY was bred a lawyer; but not succeeding at the bar, he studied painting; and afterwards applied to engraving. His capital work is the *Transfiguration*, which Mr. ADDISON calls the noblest print in the world. It is unquestionably a noble work; but DORIGNY seems to have exhausted his genius upon it: for he did nothing afterwards worth preserving. His cartoons are very poor. He engraved them in his old-age, and was obliged to employ assistants, who did not answer his expectation.

MASTERS

MASTERS IN PORTRAIT.

Among the masters in portrait REMBRANDT may take the lead. His heads are admirable copies from nature ; and perhaps the best of his works. There is infinite expression in them and character.

VAN ULIET followed REMBRANDT's manner, which he hath in many things excelled. Some of his heads nothing can exceed. The force, which he gives to every feature, the roundness of the muscle, the spirit of the execution, the strength of the character, and the effect of the whole, are all admirable.

J. LIE-

J. LIEVENS etches in the same style. His heads are executed with great spirit; and deserve a place in any collection of prints; tho' they are certainly inferior to ULIET's. — ULIET, and LIEVENS etched some historical prints, particularly the latter, whose *Lazarus*, after REMBRANDT, is a noble work; but their portraits are their best prints.

Among the imitators of REMBRANDT, we should not forget our countryman WORLIDGE; who has very ingeniously followed the manner of that master; and sometimes improved upon him. No man understood the drawing of an head better.

Many

Many of VAN DYKE's etchings do him great credit. They are chiefly to be found in a collection of the portraits of eminent artists, which VAN DYKE was at the expence of getting engraved. Several of these he etched himself. They are done slightly : but bear the character of a master. LUKE VOSTERMAN is one of the best. It is probable VAN DYKE made the drawings for most of the rest : his manner is conspicuous in them all. — A very finished etching of an *Ecce homo* passes under the name of this master. It is a good print upon the whole ; but not equal to what we might expect.

We have a few prints of Sir PETER
LELY's

PETER LELY's etching likewise; but there is nothing in them that is extraordinary.

R. WHITE was the principal engraver of portraits in CHARLES II'd's reign; but his works are miserable performances. They are said to be good likenesses: they may be so; but they are wretched prints.

BECKET and SIMONS are names, which scarce deserve to be mentioned. They were both metzotinto-scrapers, of note, only because they were the best of their time.

WHITE, the metzotinto scraper, son of the engraver, was an artist of great merit. He copied after Sir

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GOD-

GODFREY KNELLER; whom he teized so much with his proofs, that it is said Sir GODFREY forbad him his house. His metzotinto's are very beautiful. BAPTISTE, WING, STURGES, and HOOPER are all admirable prints. He himself used to say, that old and young PARR were the best portraits he ever scraped. His manner was peculiar, at the time he used it : tho' it hath since been adopted by other masters. He first etched his plate, and then scraped it. Hence his prints preserve a spirit to the last, which few metzotintos do.

SMITH was the pupil of BECKET ; but he soon excelled his master. He was esteemed the best metzotinto-scraper

scraper of his time, tho' perhaps inferior to WHITE. He hath left a very numerous collection of portraits, so numerous, that they are often bound in two large folios. He copied chiefly from Sir GODFREY; and is said to have had an apartment in his house.

—Lord SOMERS was so fond of the works of this master, that he seldom travelled without carrying them with him in the seat of his coach.—Some of his best prints are, two holy families, ANTHONY LEIGH, MARY MAGDELINE, SCALKEN, an half-length of Lady ELIZABETH CROMWELL, the Duke of SCHOMBERG on horse-back, the countess of SALISBURY, GIBBON the statuary, and a very fine hawking piece from WYKE.—After all, it must be own-

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ed, that the best of these metzotintos are inferior to what we have seen done by the masters of the present age.

MELLAN's portraits are the most indifferent of his works. They want strength, spirit, and effect.

PIAZZETA, a Venetian, hath lately published a set of heads, in the style of MELLAN; but in a much finer taste, both as to the composition, and the manner. Tho' like MELLAN, he never crosses his stroke; yet he has contrived to give his heads more force and spirit.

J. MORIN's heads are engraved in a very peculiar manner. They are stippled

stippled with a graver, after the manner of metzotinto, and have a good effect. They have force ; and at the same time, softness. Few portraits, upon the whole, are better. GUIDO BENTIVOLIUS from VANDYKE is one of the best.

J. LUTMA's heads are executed in the same way : we are told, with a chissel and mallet. They are inferior to MORIN's ; but are not without merit.

EDM. MARMION etched a few portraits in the manner of VANDYKE, and probably from him ; in which there is great ease and freedom. He has put his name only to one of them.

K 3

DRE-

DREYER's portraits are neat and elegant; but laboured to the last degree. They are copied from RIGAUD, and other French masters; and abound in all that flutter, and licentious drapery, so opposite to the simple and chaste ideas of true taste. DREYER chiefly excels in copying RIGAUD's frippery, lace, silk, fur, velvet, and other ornamental parts of dress.

RICHARDSON hath left us several heads, which he etched for Mr. POPE, and others of his friends. They are slight; but shew the spirit of a master. Mr. POPE's profile is the best.

VERTUE was an excellent antiquarian;

quarian ; but no artist. He copied with painful exactness ; in a dry, disagreeable manner, without force, or freedom. In his whole collection of heads we can scarce pick out half a dozen, which are good.

Such an artist, in metzotinto, was FABER. He has published nothing extremely bad ; and yet few things worth collecting. *Mrs.* COLLIER is one of his best prints ; and a very good one. She is leaning against a pillar, on the base of which is engraved the story of the golden apple.

HOUBRAKEN is a genius ; and has given us, in his collection of English portraits, some pieces of engraving at least equal to any thing of the kind.

K 4

Such

Such are his heads of HAMBDEN, SCHOMBERG, the earl of BEDFORD, the duke of RICHMOND particularly, and some others. At the same time we must own, that he has intermixed among his works a great number of bad prints. In his best, there is a wonderful union of softness, and freedom. A more elegant and flowing line no artist surely ever employed.

Our countryman FRY has left behind him a few very beautiful heads in metzotinto. They are all copied from nature; have great softness, and spirit; but want strength. Metzotinto is not adapted to works so large, as the heads he has published.

MASTERS

MASTERS IN ANIMAL LIFE.

BERGHEM has a genius truly pastoral; and brings before us the most agreeable scenes of rural life. The simplicity of Arcadian manners is nowhere better described than in his works. We have a large collection of prints from his designs; many etched by himself, and many by other masters. Those by himself are slight, but masterly. His execution is inimitable. His cattle, which are always the distinguishing part of his pieces, are well-drawn, admirably characterized, and generally well-grouped. Few painters excelled more in composition than BERGHEM; and yet

yet we have more beautiful instances of it in the prints etched by others, than in those by himself. Among his own etchings a few small plates of sheep, and goats are exceedingly valued.

J. VISSCHER never appears to more advantage, than when he copies BERGHEM. His excellent drawing, and the freedom of his execution give a great value to his prints, which have more the air of originals, than of copies. He is a master both in etching, and engraving. His slightest etchings, tho' copies only, are the works of a master; and when he touches with a graver, he knows how to add strength and firmness, without destroying freedom and spirit. He
might

might be said to have done every thing well, if he had not failed in the distribution of light : it is more than probable, he has not attended to the effect of it in many of the paintings, which he has copied.

HONDIUS, a native of Rotterdam, passed the greater part of his life in England. He painted animals chiefly ; was free in his manner ; extravagant in his colouring ; incorrect in his drawing ; ignorant of the effect of light ; but amazingly great in expression. His prints therefore are better, than his pictures. They possess his chief excellency without his defects. They are executed indeed with great spirit ; and afford such strong instances of animal fury, as we meet

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with

with no where, but in nature itself. His *hunted wolf* is an admirable print.

Du JARDIN understood the anatomy of domestic animals perhaps better than any other master. His drawing is admirably correct; and yet the freedom of the master is preserved. He copied nature strictly, tho' not servilely; and hath given us not only the form, but the characteristic peculiarities of each animal. He never indeed, like HONDIUS, animates his creation with the violence of savage fury. His genius takes a milder turn. All is quietness, and repose. His dogs, after their exercise, are stretched at their ease; and

and the languor of a meridian sun prevails commonly through all his pieces. His composition is beautiful; and his execution, tho' neat, is spirited.—His works, when bound together, make a volume of about 50 leaves; among which there is scarce one bad print.

REUBENS's huntings are undoubtedly superior, upon the whole, to any thing of the kind we have. There is more invention in them, and a grander style of composition than we find any where else. I class them under his name, because they are engraved by several masters. But all their engravings are poor. They resemble the paintings they are copied from, as a shadow does the object,
which

which projects it. There is something of the *shape*; but all the *finishing* is lost. And indeed there is no doubt, but the awkwardnesses, the patch-work, and the grotesque characters, which every where appear in those prints, are in the originals bold fore-shortnings, grand effects of light, and noble instances of expression.—But it is as difficult to copy the flights of REUBENS, as to translate those of HOMER. The spirit of each master evaporates in the process.

WOVERMAN'S composition is generally crowded with little ornaments. There is no simplicity in his works. He wanted a chaste judgment to correct his exuberance.—VISSCHER was
the

the first who engraved prints from this artist. He chose only a few good designs ; and executed them masterly.—MOYREAU undertook him next, and hath published a large collection. He hath finished them highly ; but with more softness than spirit. His prints however have a neat appearance, and exhibit a variety of pleasing representations ; cavalcades, marches, huntings, and encampments.

ROSA of TIVOLI etched in a very finished manner. No one out-did him in composition, and execution : He is very skilful too in the management of light. His designs are all pastoral ; and yet there is often a mixture of the heroic style in his
compo-

composition, which is very pleasing. His prints are scarce ; and, were they not so, would be valuable.

STEPHEN DE LA BELLA may be mentioned among the masters in animal life ; tho' few of his works in this way deserve any other praise, than what arises from the elegance of the execution. In general, his animals are neither well drawn, nor justly characterized. The best of his works in animal life are some heads of camels and dromedaries.

ANTHONY TEMPESTA hath etched several plates of single horses, and of huntings. He hath given great expression to his animals ; but his composition is more than ordinarily bad

bad in these prints : nor is there in any of them the least effect of light.

J. FYT hath etched a few animals ; in which you discover the drawing, and something of that inimitable strength and spirit, with which this master painted. But he has only done a few detached things in this way ; nothing to shew his skill in composition, and the management of light, both which he well understood.

In curious collections we meet with a few of CUYP's etchings. The *pictures* of this master excell in colouring, composition, drawing, and the expression of character. His *prints* have all these excellencies, except the first.

PETER DE LAER hath left us several

veral small etchings of horses, and other animals, well characterized, and executed in a bold and masterly manner. Many of them are single figures ; but when he composes, his composition is generally good, and his distribution of light seldom much amiss ; often very pleasing : his drawing too is commonly good.

PETER STOOP came from Lisbon with queen Catherine ; and was admired in England, till WYCK's superior excellence in painting eclipsed him. He hath etched a book of horses, which are very much valued ; as there is in general, accuracy in the drawing, nature in the characters, and spirit in the execution.

REM-

REMBRANDT's lions, which are etched in his usual style, are worthy the notice of a connoisseur.

BLOTELING's lions are highly finished ; but with more neatness than spirit.

PAUL POTTER etched several plates of cows and horses in a masterly manner. His manner indeed is better than his drawing ; which, in his sheep especially, is but very indifferent : neither does he characterize them with any accuracy.

BARLOW's etchings are numerous. His illustration of Esop is his greatest work. There is something pleasing in the composition, and manner of this master, tho' neither is excellent.

L 2

His

His drawing too is very indifferent ; nor does he characterize any animal justly. His birds in general are better than his beasts.

FLAMEN has etched several plates of birds, and fishes : the former are bad, the latter better than any thing of the kind we have.

HOLLAR has given us several plates in animal life ; which ought the rather to be taken notice of, as they are the best of his works. Two or three small plates of domestic fowls, ducks, wood-cocks, and other game, are very well. His shells, and butterflies are beautiful : and indeed these are the subjects suited to his genius ;

nus ; and it is a pity he did not confine himself to them.

I shall close this account with RINDINGER, who is one of the greatest masters in animal life. He is still living; but as he is so capital in this way, he must not be omitted. This artist has marked the characters of animals, especially of the more savage kind, with surprizing expression. His works may be considered as natural history. He carries us into the forest among bears, and tygers; and, with the exactness of a naturalist, describes their forms, haunts, and manner of living.—His composition is generally beautiful, and his distribution of light good; so that he commonly produces an agreeable whole. His landscape too is picturesque.

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and romantic, and well adapted to the subjects he treats.—On the other hand, his manner is laboured and wants freedom. His human figures are seldom drawn with taste. His horses are ill-characterized, and worse drawn; and indeed his drawing, in general, is but slovenly.—The prints of this master are often real history, and represent the portraits of particular animals, which had been taken in hunting. We have sometimes too the story of the chase, in high-dutch, at the bottom of the print. The idea of historical truth adds a relish to the entertainment; and we survey the animal with new pleasure, which has given diversion to a German prince for nine hours together.—The productions

ductions of RIDINGER are very numerous ; and the greater part of them good. His huntings in general, and different methods of catching animals, are the least picturesque of any of his works. But he meant them rather as didactic prints, than as pictures. Many of his fables are beautiful, particularly the 3d, the 7th, the 8th, and the 10th. I cannot forbear adding a particular encomium upon a book of the heads of wolves, and foxes.—His most capital prints are two large uprights ; one representing bears devouring a deer ; the other wild-boars reposing in a forest.

MASTERS IN LANDSKIP.

SADLER'S landskips have some merit in composition : they are picturesque and romantic ; but the manner is dry and disagreeable, the light is ill-distributed, the distances ill-kept ; and the figures bad. — There were three engravers of this name ; but none of them eminent. JOHN engraved a set of prints for the bible ; and many other small plates in the historical way ; in which we sometimes find a graceful figure, and tolerable drawing ; but on the whole, no great merit. EGIDIUS was the engraver of landskips, and is the person here criticized. RALPH chiefly copied

copied the designs of BASSAN ; and engraved in the dry disagreeable manner of his brother.

REMBRANDT'S landskips have very little to recommend them, besides their effect ; which is often surprising. One of the most admired of them goes under the name of *The three trees*.

GASPER POUSSIN etched a few landskips in a very loose, but masterly manner. It is a pity we have not more of his works.

ABRAHAM BLOEMART understood the beauty of composition, as well in landskip, as in history. His prints have little force, through the want of a proper distribution of light. Neither

ther is there much freedom in the execution ; but there is generally great elegance in the design, and great simplicity.

HOLLAR gives us views of particular places, which he copies with great truth, unornamented, as he found them. If we are satisfied with exact representations, we have them no where better than in HOLLAR's works : but if we expect pictures, we must seek them elsewhere. HOLLAR was an antiquarian, and a draughtsman ; but seems to have been unacquainted with any one principle of painting. Stiffness to the last degree is his characteristic, and a painful exactness, utterly void of all taste. His larger views are mere plans. In
some

some of his smaller, at the expence of infinite pains, something of an effect is sometimes produced. But in general, we consider him as a repository of curiosities, a record of antiquated dresses, abolished ceremonies, and edifices now in ruins.

STEPHEN DE LA BELLA's landscapes have little to recommend them, besides their neatness, and keeping. There is no great beauty in his composition ; and the foliage of his trees resembles bits of sponge. I speak chiefly of his larger works ; for which his manner is not calculated. His great neatness qualifies him better for miniature.

Bols-

BOLSWERT's landfkips after REUBENS are compofed in a very grand ftyle. Such a painter and fuch an engraver could not fail of producing fomething great. There is little variety in them; nor any of the more minute beauties arifing from contrasts, catching lights, and fuch little elegancies; but every thing is fimple, and great. The print, which goes by the name of *The waggon*, is particularly, and defervedly admired. Of thefe prints you generally meet with good impreffions, as the plates are engraved with great ftrength.

NEULANT hath etched a fmall book of the ruins of Rome, in which there is great fimplicity, and fome skill in compofition, and the diftribution

tribution of light : but the execution is harsh and disagreeable:

We have a few landfkips by an earl of *Sunderland*, in an elegant, loose manner. One of them, in which is a Spaniard standing on the foreground, is marked *G.* and *J. sculpteur-runt* : another *J. G.*

WATERLO is a name beyond any other in landskip. His subjects are perfectly rural. Simplicity is their characteristic. We find no great variety in them, nor stretch of fancy. He selects a few striking objects. A coppice, a corner of a forest, a winding-road, or a stragling village is generally the extent of his view : nor does he always introduce an offskip.

His

His composition is generally good, and his light often well distributed ; but his chief merit lies in execution, in which he is a consummate master. Every object, that he touches, has the character of nature : but he particularly excels in the foliage of trees.—It is a difficult matter to meet with the works of this master in perfection : the original plates are all retouched, and greatly injured.

SWANEVELT painted landkip at Rome, where he obtained the name of *the hermit*, from his solitary walks among the ruins of TIVOLI, and FRESCATI. He etched in the manner of WATERLO; but with less freedom. His trees, in particular, will bear no comparison with those
of

of that master. And yet, upon the whole, his works have great merit. We should think them excellent, if the idea of WATERLOO'S superiority in the same style of etching did not constantly recur.

JAMES ROUSSEAU was the disciple of SWANEVELT. He was a French protestant, and fled into England from the persecution of Lewis XIV. Here he was patronized by the duke of MONTAGUE, whose palace, now the *British Museum*, he contributed to adorn with his paintings; some of which are very good. The few etchings he hath left are very beautiful. He understood composition, and the distribution of light; and there is a fine taste in his land-

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ships,

skips, if we except perhaps only that his horizon is often taken too high. Neither can his perspective, at all times, bear a critical examination; and what is worse, it is often pedantically introduced. His figures are good in themselves, and generally well placed.—His manner is rather dry and formal.—ROUSSEAU, it may be added, was an excellent man. Having escaped the rage of persecution himself, he made it his study to lessen the sufferings of his distressed brethren by distributing among them the greatest part of his gains. Such an anecdote in the life of a painter, should not be omitted even in so short a review as this.

J. LUT-

J. LUTMA hath etched a few small landskips in a masterly manner, which discover some skill in composition, and the management of light.

ISRAEL SYLVESTRE has given us small views (some indeed of a larger size) of most of the capital ruins, churches, bridges, and castles in Italy and France. They are exceedingly neat, and touched with great spirit. This master can give beauty even to the out-lines of a modern building; and, what is more, he gives it, without injuring the truth: infomuch that I have seen a gentleman just come from his travels, pick out many of SYLVESTRE's views, one by one, tho' he had never seen them before, merely from his ac-

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quain-

quaintance with the buildings. To his praise it may be farther added, that in general he forms his view into an agreeable whole; and if his light is not always well distributed, there are so many beauties in his execution, that the eye cannot find fault. His works are very numerous, and few of them are bad. In trees he excels least.

The etchings of CLAUDE LORRAIN are below his character. We sometimes find good composition in them; but little else. His execution is bad: there is a dirtiness in it, which is disgusting: his trees are heavy; his lights seldom well-massed; and his distances only sometimes observed.—The truth is, CLAUDE's talents lay upon

upon his pallet; and he could do nothing without it.

PERELLE has great merit. His fancy is exceedingly fruitful; and supplies him with a richness, and variety in his views, which nature seldom exhibits. It is indeed too exuberant; for he often confounds the eye with too great a luxuriance. His manner is his own; and it is hard to say, whether it excels most in richness, strength, elegance, or freedom. His trees are particularly beautiful; the foliage is loose, and the ramification easy and graceful. And yet it must be confessed, that PERELLE is rather a mannerist, than a copier of nature. His views are all ideal; his trees are of one family;

M 2

and

and his light, tho' generally well distributed, is sometimes affected : it is introduced as a spot ; and is not properly melted into the neighbouring shade by a middle tint. Catching lights, used sparingly, are beautiful : PERELLE affects them.—These remarks are made principally upon the works of *old* PERELLE, as he is called. There were three engravers of this name ; the grandfather, the father, and the son. They all engraved in the same style ; but the juniors, instead of improving the family-taste, degenerated. The grandfather is the best, and the grandson the worst.

OVERBECK etched a book of Roman ruins ; which are in general,
good.

good. They are pretty large, and highly finished. His manner is free, his light often well distributed, and his composition agreeable.

GENOEL's landskips are rather free scetches, than finished prints. In that light they are beautiful. No effect is aimed at : but the free manner, in which they are touched, is pleasing ; and the composition is in general good, tho' often crouded.

BOTH's taste in landskip is elegant. His ideas are grand ; his composition beautiful ; and his execution bold, and masterly. His light too is commonly well distributed ; and his figures are excellent. We regret only, that we have so few of his works.

M 3 MARCO

MARCO RICCI's works, which are numerous, have little merit. His human figures indeed are good, and his trees tolerable ; but he produces no effect, his manner is disgusting, his cattle ill-drawn, and his distances ill-preserved.

ZEEMAN was a Dutch painter ; and excelled in sea-coasts, beaches, and distant land ; which he commonly ornamented with skiffs, and fishing-boats. His execution is neat, and his distances well kept. Of the distribution of light he knows nothing ; and the fore-grounds of many of his prints are for that reason particularly bad. But his figures are good, and his skiffs admirable. In his *sea-pieces* he introduces larger vessels ;

fels ; but his prints in this style are commonly awkward ; and disagreeable.

VANDIEST left behind him a few rough scetches, which are executed with great freedom.

GOUPEY very happily caught the manner of SALVATOR ; and in some things excelled him. There is a richness in his execution, and a spirit in his trees, which SALVATOR wants. But his figures are bad. Very gross instances not only of indelicacy of outline, but even of bad drawing, may be found in his print of PORSENNA, and in that of DIANA. Landskip is his fort ; and his best prints are those, which go under the titles of the *La-*

M 4 *trones,*

trones, the Augurs, Tobit, Hagar,
and its companion.

Our celebrated countryman HOGARTH cannot properly be omitted in a catalogue of engravers ; and yet he ranks in none of the foregoing classes. With this apology I shall introduce him here.

The works of this master abound in true humour ; and satyr, which is generally well-directed : they are admirable moral lessons, and a fund of entertainment suited to every taste ; a circumstance, which shews them to be just copies of nature. We may consider them too as valuable repositories of the manners, customs, and dresses of the present age. What a fund of entertainment would a collection

lection of this kind afford, drawn from every period of the history of Britain?—How far the works of HOGARTH will bear a *critical examination*, may be the subject of a little more enquiry.

In *design* HOGARTH was seldom at a loss. His invention was fertile; and his judgment accurate. An improper incident is rarely introduced; a proper one rarely omitted. No one could tell a story better; or make it, in all its circumstances, more intelligible. His genius, however, it must be owned, was suited only to *low*, or *familiar* subjects. It never soared above *common* life: to subjects naturally sublime: or which from antiquity, or other accidents borrowed dignity, he could not rise.

In

In *composition* we see little in him to admire. In many of his prints the deficiency is so great as plainly to shew a want of all principles ; it makes us ready to believe, that when we do meet with a beautiful group, it is the effect of chance. In one of his minor works, the *Idle 'prentice*, we seldom see a croud more beautifully managed, than in the last print. If the sheriff's officers had not been placed in a line, and had been brought a little lower in the picture, so as to have formed a pyramid with the cart, the composition had been unexceptionable : and yet the first print of this work is such a striking instance of disagreeable composition, that it is amazing, how an artist, who had any idea of beautiful forms, could suffer

suffer so unmasterly a performance to leave his hands.

Of the *distribution of light* HOGARTH had as little knowledge as of *composition*. In some of his pieces we see a good effect; as in the *Execution* just mentioned; in which if the figures at the right and left corners, had been *kept down* a little, the light would have been beautifully distributed on the foreground, and a fine secondary light spread over part of the croud: but at the same time there is so obvious a deficiency in point of effect, in most of his prints, that it is very evident he had no principles.

Neither was HOGARTH a master in *drawing*. Of the muscles and anatomy of the head and hands he had perfect

perfect knowledge ; but his trunks are often badly moulded, and his limbs ill set on. I tax him with plain bad drawing, I speak not of the niceties of anatomy, and elegance of out-line : of these indeed he knew nothing ; nor were they of use in that mode of design, which he cultivated : and yet his figures upon the whole are inspired with so much life, and meaning, that the eye is kept in good-humour, in spite of its inclination to find fault.

The author of the *Analysis of beauty*, it might be supposed, would have given us more instances of *grace*, than we find in the works of HOGARTH ; which shews strongly that theory and practice are not always united. Many opportunities his subjects naturally
afford

afford of introducing graceful attitudes; and yet we have very few examples of them. With instances of picturesque grace his works abound.

But of his *expression*, in which the force of his genius lay, we cannot speak in terms too high. In every mode of it he was truly excellent. The passions he thoroughly understood; and all the effects which they produce in every part of the human frame: he had the happy art also of conveying his ideas with the same precision, with which he conceived them.—He was excellent too in expressing any humourous oddity, which we often see stamped upon the human face. All his heads are cast in the very mould of nature. Hence that endless variety, which is displayed

played through his works ; and hence it is that the difference arises between *his* heads, and the affected caricaturas of *those masters*, who have sometimes amused themselves with patching together an assemblage of features from their own ideas. Such are SPANIOLET'S ; which, tho' admirably executed, appear plainly to have no archetypes in nature. HOGARTH'S, on the other hand, are collections of natural curiosities. The *Oxford-heads*, the *physicians-arms*, and some of his other pieces, are expressly of this humourous kind. They are truly comic ; tho' ill-natured effusions of mirth : more entertaining than SPANIOLET'S, as they are pure nature ; but less innocent, as they contain ill-directed ridicule.—

cule.—But the species of expression, in which this master perhaps most excels, is that happy art of catching those peculiarities of air, and gesture, which the ridiculous part of every profession contract from their peculiar situation ; and which for that reason become characteristic of the whole. His counsellors, his undertakers, his lawyers, his usurers are all conspicuous at sight. In a word, almost every profession may see in his works that particular species of affectation, which they should most endeavour to avoid.

The *execution* of this master is well suited to his subjects, and manner of treating them. He etches with great spirit ; and never gives one unnecessary stroke. For myself, I greatly more
value

value the works of his own needle ; than those high-finished prints, on which he employed other engravers. For as the production of an effect is not his talent ; and as this is the chief excellence of high-finiſhing, his own rough manner is certainly preferable, in which we have moſt of the force, and ſpirit of his expreſſion. The *manner* in none of his works pleaſes me ſo well, as in a ſmall print of a corner of a play-houſe. There is more ſpirit in a work of this kind, ſtruck off at once, warm from the imagination, than in all the cold correctness of an elaborate engraving. If all his works had been executed in this ſtyle, with a few improvements in the compoſition, and the management of light, they would certainly

certainly have been a much more valuable collection of prints than they are. The *rake's progress*, and some of his other works, are both etched and engraved by himself: they are well done; but it is plain he meant them as furniture. As works designed for a critick's eye, they would certainly have been better without the engraving, except a few touches in a very few places. The want of effect too would have been less conspicuous, which in his highest finished prints is disagreeably striking.

CHAPTER

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CHAPTER IV.

Remarks on particular Prints.

THE RESURRECTION OF LA- ZARUS, BY BLOEMART.

WITH regard to *design*, this print has great merit. The point of time is very judiciously chosen. It is a point between the first command, *Lazarus come forth*; and

N 2 the

the second, *Loose him, and let him go.* The first astonishment of the two sisters is now over. The predominant passion is gratitude; which is discovering itself in praise. One of the attendants is telling the yet stupefied man, "That is your sister." He himself, collecting his scattered ideas, directs his gratitude to Christ. Jesus directs it farther, to heaven. So far the design is good. But what are those idle figures on the right hand, and on the left? some of them seem no way concerned in the action. Two of the principal of them are introduced as grave-diggers; but even in that capacity they were unwanted; for *the place*, we are told, *was a cave, and a stone rolled upon the mouth.* When a painter is employed on a barren

barren subject, he must make up his groups as he is able : but there is no barrenness here : and the painter might with propriety have introduced in the room of the grave-diggers, some of the Pharisaical party maligning the action. Such we are told were on the spot. They are figures of consequence in the story ; and ought not to have been shoved back, as they are, among the appendages of the piece.

The *composition* is almost faultless. The principal group is finely disposed. It's form is nearly that of a right-angled triangle. The hand of Christ is the apex. The kneeling figure, and the dark figure looking up make the two other angles. The group

N 3

opens

opens in a beautiful manner, and discovers every part. It is equally beautiful, when considered, as combined with the figures on the left. It then forms an easy inclined plane, of which the highest figure is the apex, and the dark figure just mentioned, on the left of Lazarus is the angle at the base. Such combinations of triangular forms have a fine effect.

The *light* is very ill-distributed, tho' the figures are disposed to receive the most beautiful effect of it. The whole is one glare. It had been better, if all the figures on the elevated ground, on the right, had been in strong shadow. The extended arm, the head, and shoulder of the gravedigger might have received catching
 2 lights.

lights. A little more light might have been thrown upon the principal figure; and a little less upon the figure kneeling. The remaining figures, on the left, should have been kept down. Thus the light would have centered strongly upon the capital group, and would have faded gradually away.

The single figures are in general good. The principal one indeed is not so capital as might be wished. The character is not quite pleasing; the right arm is awkwardly introduced, if not ill-drawn; and the whole disagreeably incumbered with drapery.—Lazarus is very fine: the drawing, the expression, and grace of the figure are all good.—The figure

N 4 kneeling

kneeling is not very graceful ; but it contrasts with the group.—The grave-diggers are both admirable figures. It is a pity, they should be incumbrances only.

The *drawing* is good ; yet there seems to be something amiss in the pectoral muscles of the grave-digger on the right. The hands too, in general, of all the figures, are constrained and awkward. Few of them are in natural action.

The *manner* is strong, distinct, and expressive. It is mere engraving, without any etching. The drapery of the kneeling figure is particularly well touched : as are also the head, and leg of LAZARUS ; and the grave-digger on the left.

THE

THE DEATH OF POLYCRATES, BY
SALVATOR ROSA.

The *story* is well told : every part is fully engaged in the subject, and properly subordinate to it.

The *disposition* is agreeable. The contrivance of the groups, falling one into another, is very pleasing : And yet the form would have been more beautiful, if a ladder, with a figure upon it, a piece of loose drapery, a standard, or some other object had been placed on the left side of the cross, to have filled up that formal vacancy, in the shape of a right-angle, and to have made the pyramid more compleat. The groups themselves

felves are simple and elegant. The three figures on horse-back indeed are bad. A line of heads is always unpleasing.

We have no idea of *keeping*. The whole has only one surface; which might have been prevented by a little more strength on the fore-ground, and a flighter sky.

The *light* is distributed without any judgment. It might perhaps have been improved, if the group of the soldier resting upon his shield, had been in shadow; with a few catching lights. This shadow, passing through the label, might have extended over great part of the fore-ground above it: by which we should have had a body of shadow to balance the light of the centre-group. The
lower

lower figures of the equestrian-group might have received a middle tint, with a few strong touches; the upper figures might have caught the light, to detach them from the ground.

With regard to the figures taken separately, they are almost unexceptionably good. You will seldom indeed see so many good figures in any collection of such a number. The young soldier leaning over his shield; the other figures of that group; the soldier pointing, in the middle of the picture; and the figure behind him spreading his hands, are all in the highest degree elegant, and graceful. The distant figures too are beautiful. The expression, in the whole body of the spectators, is very striking.

Some

Some are more, and some less affected; but every one in a degree.—All the figures however are not faultless. POLYCRATES hangs ungracefully upon his cross: his body is too much made up of parallel lines, and right angles. His face is strongly marked with agony: but his legs are disproportioned to his body.—The three lower figures of the equestrian-group, are bad. They are properly placed to catch the abruptness of the centre-group, and finish the pyramidal form; but they might have had a little more meaning, and a little more grace.—One of the equestrian figures also, that nearest the cross, is formal, and disgusting: and as to an horse, SALVATOR seems not to have had the least idea of the proportion,

portion, and anatomy of that animal.

The scenery is inimitable. The rock broken, and covered with shrubs, at the top ; and afterwards spreading into one grand, and simple shade, is in itself a pleasing object ; and affords an excellent back-ground to the figures.

The *execution* of this print is equal to that of any of SALVATOR'S works. The passages, in which this master's *manner* is more particularly characterized, are, the soldier sitting with the shield, the pointing figure in the middle group, the head in armour behind it, the distant groups immediately on the right, and left of the cross ; and the scenery in general.

THE TRIUMPH OF SILENUS, BY
PETER TESTA.

P. TESTA seems, in this elegant and masterly performance, as far as his sublime ideas can be comprehended, to intend a satyr upon drunkenness.

The *design* seems to be perfect. The God is introduced in the middle of the piece, holding an ivy-crown, and supported by his train, in all the pomp of unwieldy majesty. Before him dance a band of bacchanalian rioters ; while Intemperance, Debauchery, and unnatural Lusts complete the immoral festival. In the offskip rises the temple of Priapus,
hard

hard by a mountain, dedicated to lewdness, nymphs and fatyrs.—In the heavens are represented the *Moon* and *Stars* pushing back the *Sun*; to shew that the actions, of which this night was a witness, dreaded the approach of light.

The *disposition* has less merit; yet is not unpleasing. The *whole* group, on the left of SILENUS, and the *several parts* of it, are happily disposed. The group of dancers, on the other side, is crouded, and ill-shapen. It is disagreeable too for want of contrast. The two principal figures, each standing on one leg, appear disgusting counter-parts. The *whole* (I speak only of the terrestrial groups) is disposed in the form of an easy inclined

clined plane ; which partakes as little as possible of the pyramidal form. It might perhaps have had a better effect, if an elegant canopy had been holden over SILENUS, which would have been no improper appendage ; and, by bringing the apex of the pyramid over the principal figure, would have given more variety to the whole. The sameness too in the disposition of the etherial and the terrestrial figures, which is rather displeasing, would have been prevented by this slight alteration.

The *light*, with regard to *particular figures* is very beautiful. But such a light, at best, gives you only the idea of a picture examined by a candle. Every figure, as you hold the
candle

his train, they might be enlightened by a very strong torch-light; which might be carried by the dancing figures. The light would then fall nearly as it does, upon the principal group. The other figures should be *brought down* to a middle tint. This kind of light would naturally produce a gloom in the back-ground; but there is no occasion to make it dark, as more torch-light might be supposed.

With regard to the figures taken separately, they are conceived with such classical purity, and simplicity of taste, so elegant in the drawing, so graceful in every attitude, and at the same time marked with such manly expression, that if I were obliged to fix upon any print as an example of

of all the beauties, of which single figures are capable of receiving, I should be tempted to give the preference to this: tho' at the same time it must be owned, that some of them give you too much the idea of marble.

The most striking instances of fine *drawing* are seen in the principal figure; in the legs of the figure that supports him; and in those of the figure dancing with the pipes; in the man and woman behind the centaur; in the figure in the clouds, with his right hand over his knee; in the Apollo; and particularly in that bold, fore-shortened figure of the sign Capricorn.

Instances of *expression* we have in the unweildiness of SILENUS. He

appears so dead a weight, so totally unelastic, that every part of him, which is not supported, sinks with its own gravity. The sensibility too with which his bloated body, like a quagmire, feels every touch, is strongly expressed in his countenance. The figure, which supports him, expresses in every muscle the labour of the action. The dancing figures, if we except that with the thyrsus, are all strongly characterized. The pushing figures in the sky are marked with great expression; and above all the threatening Capricorn, who is represented in the act of drawing a bow.

With regard to *grace*, every figure, at least every capital one, is agreeable; if we except only that figure, which lies kicking its legs upon the ground.

But

But we have the strongest instances of grace in the figure dancing with the pipes, in the man and woman behind the centaur, (which, it is not improbable, might be designed for BACCHUS and ARIADNE) and in the boy lying on the ground.

With regard to *execution*, we rarely see an instance of it in greater perfection. Every head, every muscle, and every extremity is touched with infinite spirit. The very appendages are fine; and the stone-pines, which adorn the back-ground, are marked with such taste and precision, as if landscape had been this artist's only study.

SMITH'S

SMITH'S PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE
OF SHOMBERG, FROM KNELLER.

KNELLER, even when he laid himself out to excel, was often but a tawdry painter. His equestrian portrait of king WILLIAM, at Hampton-court, is a very unmasterly performance: the composition is bad; the colouring gaudy; the whole is void of effect, and there is scarce a good figure in it.—The composition before us is more pleasing, tho' the effect is little better. An equestrian figure, at best, is an awkward subject. The legs of an horse are great incumbrances in grouping. VANDYKE indeed has managed king CHARLES the First
on

on horse-back with great judgment ; and RUBENS too, at Hampton-court, has made a noble picture of the duke of ALVA, tho' his horse is very ill-drawn.—In the print before us the figure fits with grace and dignity ; but the horse is no Bucephalus : its character is only that of a managed-pa. The bush, growing by the duke's trunchion, is a trifling circumstance ; and helps to break into more parts, a composition already too much broken.—The *execution* is throughout excellent ; and tho' the parts are rather too small for metzotinto, yet SMITH has given them all their force.

PETHER'S

PETHER'S METZOTINTO OF REM-
BRANDT'S JEWISH RABBI.

The character is that of a stern, haughty man, big with the idea of his own importance. The *rabbi* is probably fictitious; but the *character* was certainly taken from nature. There is great dignity in it; which in a work of REMBRANDT'S is the more extraordinary.—The full expression of it is given us in the print. The unelastic heaviness of age, which is so well described in the original, is as well preserved in the copy. The three equidistant lights on the head, on the ornament, and on the hands, are disagreeable:
in

in the print they could not be removed ; but it might have been judicious to have *kept down* the two latter a little more.—With regard to the execution, every part is scraped with the utmost softness, and delicacy. The muscles are round and plump ; and the insertions of them, which in an old face are very apparent, are well expressed. Such a variety of middle tints, and melting lights were difficult to manage ; and yet they are managed with great tenderness. The looseness of the beard is masterly. The hands are exactly those of a fat old man. The stern eyes are full of life ; and the nose and mouth are admirably touched. The separation of the lips in some parts, and adhesion in others, are characteristic strokes ;
and

and happily preserved. The folds and lightness of the turban are very elegant. The robe, about the shoulder, is unintelligible, and ill-managed: but this was the painter's fault.—In a word, when we examine this very beautiful metzotinto, we must acknowledge, that no engraving can equal it in softness, and delicacy.

HONDIUS'S

HONDIUS'S HUNTED WOLF.

The composition, in this little print, is good; and yet there is too much similitude in the direction of the bodies of the several animals. The shape also of the group would have been more pleasing, if the vertical angle had been rather more acute. The group is too much broken also, and wants solidity. The horizon is taken too high; unless the dimensions of the print had been higher. The rising-ground, above the wolf's head, had been offskip enough; and yet the rock, which rises higher, is so beautifully touched; that it would be a pity to remove it.—The *light* is distributed

distributed without any judgment. It might have been improved, if all the interstices among the legs, and heads of the animals had been *kept down*; and the shadow made very strong under the fawn, and the wounded dog. This would have given a bold relief to the figures; and might, without any other alteration, have produced a good effect.—The *drawing* is not faultless. The legs and body of the wounded dog are but very inaccurate: nor does the attacking dog stand firm upon his right leg.—With regard to *expression*, HONDIUS has exerted his full force. The expression both of the wounded dog, and of the wolf, is admirable: but the expression of the attacking dog is a most bold and masterly copy from nature.

nature. His attitude shews every nerve convulsed ; and his head is a masterpiece of animal fury. — We should add, that the slaughtered animal is so ill-characterized, that we scarce know what it is. The *execution* is equal to the expression. It is neat, and highly finished ; but discovers in every touch the spirit of a master.

THE

THE 5th PLATE OF DU JARDIN'S
ANIMALS.

The *design*, tho' humble, is simple and beautiful. The two dogs reposing at noon after the labour of the morning, the impliments of fowling, the fictitious hedge, and the loop-holes through it, all correspond together, and agreeably tell the little history of the day.—The *composition* is beautiful ; tho' it might have been improved, if another dog, or something equivalent, had been introduced in the vacancy at the left corner. This would have given the group of dogs a better form. The nets, and fowling-pieces are judiciously added;
and

and make an agreeable shape with the dogs. The hedge also adds another pyramidal form ; which would have been more pleasing, if the left corner of the reeds had been a little higher.—The *light* is well distributed ; only there is too much of it. The farther dog might have been *taken down* a little ; and the hinder parts of the nearer.—The *drawing* and *expression* are pure nature ; and the *execution* elegant and masterly.

WATER.

WATERLOO'S TOBIAS.

The landskip I mean, is an upright of the largest size, which this master ever used ; near twelve inches in height, by ten. On the near ground stands an oak, which forms a diagonal through the print. The second distance is composed of a rising ground, connected with a rock, which is covered with shrubs. The oak, and the shrubs make a vista, through which you have an extensive view into the country. The figures, which consist of an angel, Tobias, and a dog, are descending an hill, which forms the second distance. The print, with

the description, cannot be mistaken.--
 The *composition* is very pleasing. The trees, on the fore-ground, spreading over the top of the print, and sloping to a point at the bottom, give the beautiful form of an inverted pyramid ; which, in trees especially, has often a fine effect. To this form the inclined plane, on which the figures stand, and which is beautifully broken, is a good contrast. The rock approaches to a perpendicular, and the distance to an horizontal line. All together make such a combination of beautiful and contrasting shapes, that the whole is very pleasing. If I should find fault with any thing, it is the regularity of the rocks. There is no variety in parallel lines ; and it had been very easy

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to

to have broken them.—The *keeping* is very accurate. The second, and third distance are both judiciously managed.—The *light* is beautifully disposed. To prevent heaviness, it is introduced upon the tree, both at the top and bottom; but it is properly *kept down*. A mass of shade succeeds upon the ground of the second distance; and is continued upon the water. The light breaks, in a blaze, upon the bottom of the rock, and masses the *whole*. The trees, shrubs, and upper part of the rock are happily thrown into a middle tint, to prevent extravagance. Perhaps the effect of the distant country might have been better, if all the lights upon it had been *kept down*, except one easy catching light upon the town, and

and the rising ground on which it stands.—The *execution* is exceedingly beautiful. No artist had an happier manner of expressing trees than WALTERLO; and the tree before us is one of his capital works. The shape of it we have already criticized. The bole and ramification are as beautiful as the shape. The foliage, if I were not afraid of speaking the language of extravagance, seems the work of enchantment. Such an union of strength, and lightness is rarely found. The extremities are touched with infinite tenderness; the strong masses of light are relieved with shadows equally strong; and yet great ease, and softness are preserved. The fore-ground is highly enriched; and indeed the whole print, and every part of it, is full of art, and full of nature.

P 2

THE

THE DELUGE AT COEVERDEN, BY
ROMAN LE HOOGHE.

This is an historical landskip, a style very different from that of the last. WATERLO had nothing in view, but to form an agreeable picture. He had all nature before him; through which his imagination might range. The figures he introduced, unconnected with his subject, served only to embellish it. Any other figures would have answered his design as well. But LE HOOGHE was confined within narrower lines. He had a *country* to describe, and a *story* to tell. The *country* is the environs of Coeverden, a Dutch town,
with

with a view of that immense bank, which the bishop of Munster, in the year 1673, threw up, and fortified at a vast expence, to lay the town under water. The *story*, is the ruin of that bank, which was broken through in three places, by the violence of the waters in a storm. The subject was great, and difficult; and yet the artist has acquitted himself in a masterly manner. The town of Coeverden fills the distant view. The country is spread with a deluge; the sky with a tempest; and the breaches in the bank appear in all their horror.—The *composition*, in the distant, and middle parts, is as pleasing as such an extensive subject can be. An elevated horizon, which is always disgusting, was necessary here

to give a distinct view of the whole.—The *light* too is thrown over the distant parts in good masses.—The *expression* of the figures, of the horses especially, is very strong : those, which the driver is turning, to avoid the horrid chasm before him, are impressed with the wildest character of terror : and indeed the whole scene of distress, and the horrible confusion in every part of it, are admirably described.—The *execution* is not equal to that of many of LE HOOGE's works. The sky is hard ; and there is a dryness in the whole. If in any part the master appears like himself, it is in the figures on the left of the fore-ground.—There are other faults in this print. The shape of it is bad. A little more length
would

would have enlarged the idea; and the town would have stood better not quite in the middle.—But what is most faulty, is the disproportion, and littleness of the fore-ground on the right. The spirit, which the artist had maintained through the whole description, flags miserably here. Whereas *here* he should have closed the whole with some vast, and noble confusion; which would have given *keeping* to the distant parts, and struck the spectator with the strongest images of horror. Instead of this, we are presented with a few pigs, and calves floundering in the water. The thought seems borrowed from Ovid. In the midst of a world in ruins, *Nat lupus inter oves.*

HOGARTH'S RAKE'S PROGRESS.

The first print of this capital work is an excellent representation of a young heir taking possession of a miser's effects. The passion of avarice, which hoards every thing, without distinction, what is, and what is not valuable, is admirably described.—The *composition*, tho' not excellent, is not unpleasing. The principal group, consisting of the young gentleman, the taylor, the appraiser, the papers, and chest, is agreeably shaped : but the eye is hurt with the disagreeable regularity of three heads nearly in a line, and at equal distances.—The *light* is not ill-disposed.

It

It falls on the principal figures : but the effect might have been improved. If the extreme parts of the mass, (the white apron on one side, and the memorandum-book on the other,) had been in shade, the *repose* had been less injured. The detached parts of a group should rarely catch a strong body of light.—We have no striking instances of *expression* in this print. The principal figure is unmeaning. The only one, which displays the true *vis comica* of HOGARTH, is the appraiser fingering the gold. You enter at once into his character.—The young woman might have furnished the artist with an opportunity of presenting a graceful figure ; which would have been more pleasing. The figure he *has* introduced

is

is by no means an object of allure-
ment.—The *perspective* is accurate;
but affected. So many windows, and
open doors may shew the author's
learning; but they break the back-
ground, and injure the simplicity of
it.

The second print introduces our
hero into all the dissipation of modish
life. We became first acquainted
with him, when a boy of eighteen.
He is now of age; has entirely thrown
off the clownish school-boy; and as-
sumes the man of fashion. Instead
of the country-taylor, who took
measure of him for his father's mourn-
ing, he is now attended by French-
barbers, French-tailors, poets, mil-
liners, jockies, bullies, and the whole
I retinue

retinue of a fine gentleman.—The *expression*, in this print, is wonderfully great. The dauntless front of the bully; the keen eye, and elasticity of the fencing-master, and the flimpering importance of the dancing-master are admirably expressed. The last is perhaps rather a little outrè; and it may be added, but very indifferently drawn. The architect is a strong copy from nature.—The *composition* seems to be entirely subservient to the expression. It appears, as if HOGARTH had scetched in his memorandum-book all the characters, which he has here introduced; but was at a loss how to group them; and chose rather to introduce them in detached figures, as he had scetched them, than to lose any part of the expres-

expression by combining them.—The *light* is very ill distributed. It is spread indiscriminately over the print; and destroys the *whole*.—We have no instance of *grace* in any of the figures. The principal figure is very deficient. There is no contrast in the limbs; which is always attended with a degree of ungracefulness.—The *execution* is very good. It is elaborate, and yet free.—The satyr on operas, tho' it may be well-directed, is forced and unnatural.

The third plate carries us still deeper in the history. We meet our hero engaged in one of his evening-amusements. This print, on the whole, is no very extraordinary effort of genius.—The *design* is good; and

and may be a very exact description of the humours of a brothel.—The *composition* too is not amiss. But we have few of those masterly strokes, which distinguish the works of HOGARTH. The whole is plain history. The lady setting the world on fire, is the best thought : and there is some humour in furnishing the room with a set of Cæsars ; and not placing them in order.—The *light* is ill-managed. By a few alterations, which are obvious, particularly by throwing the lady dressing, into the shade, the disposition of it might have been tolerable. But still we should have had an absurdity to answer, whence comes it? Here is light in abundance ; but no visible source.—*Expression* we have very little through
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the whole print. The principal figure is the best. The ladies have all the air of their profession; but no variety of character. HOGARTH'S women are, in general, very inferior to his men. For which reason I prefer the *rake's progress* to the *barlot's*. The female-face indeed has seldom strength of feature enough to admit the strong markings of expression.

Very disagreeable accidents often befall gentlemen of pleasure. An event of this kind is recorded in the fourth print; which is now before us. Our hero going, in full dress, to pay his compliments at court, on St. David's-day, was accosted in the rude manner, which is here represented. —The *composition* is good. The form
of

of the group, made up of the figures in action, the chair, and the lamp-lighter, is pleasing. Only here we have an opportunity of remarking, that a group is disgusting, when the extremities of it are heavy. A group in some respect should resemble a tree. The heavier part of the foliage, (the *cup*, as the landscape-painter calls it) is always near the middle : the outside-branches, which are relieved by the sky, are light and airy. An inattention to this rule has given a heaviness to the group before us. The two bailiffs, the woman, and the chairman are all huddled together in that part of the group, which should have been the lightest ; while the middle part, where the hand holds the door, wants strength and

con-

consistence. It may be added too, that the four heads, in the form of a diamond, make an unpleasing shape. All regular figures should studiously be avoided.—The *light* would have been well distributed, if the bailiff holding the arrest, and the chairman, had been a little lighter, and the woman darker. The glare of the white apron is disagreeable.—We have, in this print, some beautiful instances of *expression*. The surprize and terror of the poor gentleman is apparent in every limb, as far as is consistent with the fear of discomposing his dress. The insolence of power in one of the bailiffs, and the unfeeling heart in the other, which can jest with misery, are strongly marked. The self-importance too of the honest

Cam-

Cambrian is not ill-portrayed ; who is chiefly introduced to settle the chronology of the story.—In point of *grace*, we have nothing striking. HOGARTH might have introduced a degree of it in the female figure ; at least he might have contrived to vary the disagreeable, and heavy form of her drapery. — The *perspective* is good, and makes an agreeable shape. — I cannot leave this print without remarking the *falling ban-box*. Such representations of quick motion are very absurd ; and every moment the absurdity grows stronger. You cannot deceive the eye. The falling body *must* appear *not* to fall. Objects of that kind are beyond the power of representation.

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Diffi-

Difficulties crowd so fast upon our hero, that at the age of twenty-five, which he seems to have attained in the fifth plate, we find him driven to the necessity of marrying a woman, whom he detests, for her fortune. The *composition* here is very good; and yet we have a disagreeable regularity in the climax of the three figures, the maid, the bride, and the bride-groom.—The *light* is not ill-distributed. The principal figure too is *graceful*; and there is strong *expression* in the seeming tranquility of his features. He hides his contempt of the object before him, as well as he can; and yet he cannot do it. She too has as much meaning, as can appear through the deformity of her features. The clergyman's face we

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are

are well acquainted with, and also his wig; tho' we cannot pretend to say, where we have seen either. The clerk too is an admirable fellow. — The *perspective* is well understood; but the church is too small; and the wooden post, which seems to have no use, divides the picture very disagreeably.—The creed lost, the commandments broken, and the poor's-box obstructed by a cobweb, are all excellent strokes of satyrical humour.

The fortune, which our adventurer has just received, enables him to make one push more at the gaming-table. He is exhibited in the sixth print, venting curses on his folly for having lost his last stake. — This is upon the whole perhaps the best print

of the set. The horrid scene it describes, was never more inimitably drawn. The *composition* is artful, and natural. If the shape of the whole be not quite pleasing, the figures are so well grouped, and with so much ease and variety, that you cannot take offence.—In point of light, it is more culpable. There is not shade enough among the figures to balance the glare. If the neck-cloth, and weepers of the gentleman in mourning had been removed, and his hands thrown into shade, even that alone would have improved the effect.—The *expression*, in almost every figure, is admirable; and the whole is a strong representation of the human mind in a storm. Three stages of that species of madness, which attends

attends gaming, are here described. On the first shock, all is inward dismay. The ruined gamester is represented leaning against a wall, with his arms across, lost in an agony of horror. Perhaps never passion was described with so much force. In a short time this horrible gloom bursts into a storm of fury: he tears in pieces what comes next him; and kneeling down, invokes curses upon himself. He next attacks others; every one in his turn whom he imagines to have been instrumental in his ruin.—The eager joy of the winning gamesters, the attention of the usurer, the vehemence of the watchman, and the profound reverie of the high-wayman are all admirably marked. There is

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great

great coolness too expressed in the little we see of the fat gentleman at the end of the table. The figure opposing the mad-man is bad: it has a drunken appearance; and drunkenness is not the vice of a gaming-table.—The principal figure is *ill drawn*. The *perspective* is formal; and the *execution* but indifferent: in heightening his expression HOGARTH has lost his spirit.

The seventh plate, which gives us the view of a jail, has very little in it. Many of the circumstances, which may well be supposed to increase the misery of a confined debtor, are well contrived; but the fruitful genius of HOGARTH, I should think, might have treated the subject

subject in a more copious manner. The episode of the fainting woman might have given way to many circumstances more proper to the occasion. This is the same woman, whom the rake discards in the first print; by whom he is rescued in the fourth; who is present at his marriage; who follows him into jail; and lastly to Bedlam. The thought is rather unnatural, and the moral certainly culpable. — The *composition* is bad. The group of the woman fainting, is a round heavy mass: and the other group is very ill shapen. The *light* could not be worse managed; and, as the groups are contrived, can hardly be improved. — In the principal figure there is great *expression*; and the fainting scene is

Q 4

well

well described.—A scheme to pay off the national debt by a man who cannot pay his own; and the attempt of a filly rake to retrieve his affairs by a work of genius, are admirable strokes of humour.

The eighth plate brings the fortunes of our hero to a conclusion. It is a very expressive representation of the most horrid scene, which human nature can exhibit. — The *composition* is not bad. The group, in which the lunatic is chained, is well managed; and if it had been carried a little further towards the middle of the picture, and the two women, (who seem very oddly introduced) had been removed, both the composition, and the distribution of light had been good. —
The

The *drawing* of the principal figure is a more accurate piece of anatomy, than I should have expected from HOGARTH. The *expression* of this figure is rather unmeaning; and very inferior to the strong characters of all the other lunatics. The fertile genius of the artist has introduced as many of the causes of madness, as he could well have collected; tho' there is a little tautology. There are two religionists, and two astronomers. Yet there is variety in each; and strong *expression* in all the characters. The self-satisfaction, and conviction of him, who has discovered the longitude, the mock majesty of the monarch, the moody melancholy of

of the lover, and the superstitious horror of the popish devotée are all admirable.—The *perspective* is simple and proper.



CHAPTER V.

CAUTIONS IN COLLECTING PRINTS.

THE collector of prints may be first cautioned against indulging a desire to become possessed of *all* the works of any master. There are no masters whose works in the
gross

gross deserve notice. No man is equal to himself in all his compositions. I have known a collector of REMBRANDT ready to give any price for a print or two, which he wanted to compleat his collection; tho' it had been to REMBRANDT's credit, if those prints had been suppressed. There is no doubt, but if one third of the works of this master should be tried by the rules of just criticism, they would appear of little value. The great prince *Eugene*, it is said, was a collector of this kind, and piqued himself upon having in his possession, *all the works of all the masters*. His collection was bulky, and cost fourscore thousand pounds; but when sifted, could not, at that time of day, be worth so many hundreds.

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The collector of prints may secondly be cautioned against a superstitious veneration for names. A true judge leaves the *master* out of the question, and only examines the *work*. But with a little genius nothing sways like a great name. It carries a wonderful force; covers glaring faults, and creates imaginary beauties. That species of criticism is certainly just, which examines the different manners of different masters, with a view to discover in how many ways a good effect may be produced, and which produces the best. But to be curious in finding out a master, in order *there* to rest the judgment, is a kind of criticism very poultry, and illiberal. It is judging of the work by the master, instead
of

of judging of the master by the work. Hence it is, that such vile prints as the *Woman in the cauldron*, and *Mount Parnassus*, obtain credit among connoisseurs. If you ask wherein their beauty consists? you are informed, they are engraved by MARK ANTONIO: and if that do not satisfy you, you are further assured, they are after RAPHAEL. This absurd taste raised an honest indignation in that ingenious artist PICART; who having shewn the world, by his excellent imitations, how ridiculous it is to pay a blind veneration to *names*, tells us, that he had compared some of the engravings of the antient masters with the original pictures, and found them very bad copies. He speaks of the stiffness, which in general

runs through them — of the hair of children, which resembles pot-hooks — and of the ignorance of those engravers in anatomy, drawing, and the distribution of light.

A third caution, which may be of use in collecting prints, is, not to rate their value by their *scarceness*. Scarceness will make a *valuable* print *more* valuable: but to make scarceness the standard of a prints value, is to mistake an accident, for merit. This folly is founded in vanity; and arises from a desire of possessing what no body else can possess. The want of *real* merit is made up by *imaginary*; and the object is intended to be *kept*, not *looked at*. Yet absurd as this false taste is, nothing is more common;

common ; and a trifling genius may be found, who will give ten guineas for HOLLAR'S shells, which valued according to their real merit, the scarcity of them being added to the account are not worth more than as many shillings. — Instances in abundance might be collected of the prevalence of this folly. LE CLERC, in his print of *Alexander's Triumph*, had given a profile of that prince. The print was shewn to the duke of Orleans, who was pleased with it on the whole, but justly enough objected to the side-face. The obsequious artist crased it, and engraved a full one. A few impressions had been taken from the plate in its first state, which sell among the curious

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curious for ten times the price of the impressions taken after the face was altered.—CALLOT once pleased with a little plate of his own etching, made an hole in it, through which he drew a ribbon, and wore it at his button. The impressions after the hole was made, are very scarce, and amazingly valuable.—VANDYKE etched a print of the holy family, in which St. John was represented laying his hand upon the virgin's shoulder. The print, before it was published, was shewn among his critical friends, some of whom thought the action of St. John too familiar. The painter was convinced, and removed the hand. But he was mistaken, when he thought he added value to his print by the alteration. The impressions, which got abroad with

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the hand upon the shoulder, would buy up all the rest, three times over, in any auction in London.—Many of REMBRANDT's prints receive infinite value from little accidental alterations of this kind. A few impressions were taken from one plate, before a dog was introduced; from another, before a white horse-tail was turned into a black one; from a third, before a sign-post was inserted at an ale-house door; and all the scarce prints from these plates, tho' altered for the better, are the prints of value: the rest are common and cheap.—I shall conclude these instances with a story of a late celebrated collector of pictures. He was shewing his collection with great satisfaction; and after expatiating upon many noble works by GUIDO,

MARRATTI,

MARRATTI, and other masters, he turned suddenly to the gentleman, whom he attended; and, "Now, Sir, said he, I'll shew you a real curiosity: there is a WOVERMAN without a horse in it."—The circumstance, it is true, was uncommon; but was unluckily that very circumstance, which made the picture of little value.

Let the collector of prints be cautioned, fourthly, to beware of buying copies for originals. Most of the works of the capital masters have been copied; and many of them so well, that if a person be not versed in prints, he may easily be deceived. Were the copies really as good as the originals, the name would signify

signify nothing: but, like translations, they necessarily fall short of the spirit of the original; and contract a stiffness from the fear of erring. When seen apart, they look well; but when compared with the originals, the difference easily appears. Thus CALLOT's *beggars* have been so well copied, that the difference between the originals and the copies would not immediately strike you; but when you compare them, it is obvious. There is a plain want of freedom; the characters are less strongly marked; and the extremities are less accurately touched.—It is a difficult matter to give rules to assist in distinguishing the copy from the original. In most cases the engraver's name, or his mark (which should

should be well known) will be a sufficient direction. These the copyist is seldom hardy enough to forge. But in anonymous prints it is matter of more difficulty. All that can be done is, to attend carefully to the *freedom* of the *manner*, in the *extremities* especially, in which the copyist is more liable to fail. When you are pretty well acquainted with the *manner* of a master, you cannot well be deceived. When you are not, your best way is to be directed by those who are.

The last caution I shall give to the collector of prints, is, to take care he purchase not bad impressions.—There are three things which make an impression bad. —The first is, it's
being

being *ill taken off*. Some prints seem to have received the force of the roller at intervals. The impression is double; and gives that glimmering appearance, which illudes the eye.—A second thing, which makes an impression bad, is *a worn plate*. There is as much difference between the first and the last impression of the same plate, as between two different prints. The *effect* is wholly lost in a faint impression; and you have nothing left but a vapid design without spirit, and without force. In metzotinto especially a strong impression is desirable. For the spirit of a metzotinto quickly evaporates; without which it is the most insipid of all prints. In engraving and etching there will be
always

always here and there a dark touch, which long preserves an appearance of spirit: but metzotinto is a flat surface; and when it begins to wear, it wears *all over*. Too many of the works of all the great masters, which are commonly hawked about at auctions, or sold in shops, are in this wretched state. It is difficult to meet with a good impression. The SALVATORS, REMBRANDTS, and WATERLOS, which we meet with now, except here and there, in some choice collection, are seldom better than mere reverses. You see the form of the print; but the elegant, and masterly touches are gone; back-grounds and fore-grounds are jumbled together by the confusion of all distance; and you have

have rather the shadow of a print left, than the print itself. — The last thing which makes a bad impression, is *retouching a worn plate*. Sometimes this is performed by the master himself; and then the spirit of the impression may be still preserved. But most commonly the retouching part is done by some bungler, into whose hands the plate has fallen; and then it is most execrable. In a *worn plate*, at least what you have is good: you have the remains of something excellent; and if you are versed in the works of the master, your imagination may be agreeably exercised in making out what is lost. But when the plate has gone through the hands of a bungler, who has worked it over with

with his infamous scratches, the idea of the master is lost; and you have nothing left, but strong, harsh, and unmeaning lines upon a faint ground; which is the most disagreeable compound, with which the eye can be presented. Such prints, and many such there are, though offered us under the name of REMBRANDT, or WATERLO, are of little value. Those masters would not have owned such works.—Yet, as we are often obliged to take up with such impressions, as we can get; let us rather chuse the *faint* impression, than the *retouched* one.

T H E E N D.

E R R A T A.

Page 53. line 2. rēad, *behind them.*

Page 103. line 17. read, *punishment.*

Page 116. line 4. read, *the work.*

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